

NO 2  
OCT.-NOV.

# Lovelorn

STIRRING STORIES OF REAL ROMANCE

10¢

BUT, ANDRE. I... I DON'T  
**UNDERSTAND!** YOU TOLD  
ME YOU LOVED ME...

52 PGS.

AMERICAN  
COMICS GROUP

ACG

CAFE DE PARIS

WHAT DO YOU **AMERICANS** KNOW  
ABOUT **LOVE**? WE **FRENCH** ARE  
**BORN** TO IT! IT'S IN OUR HEARTS  
... IN OUR BLOOD... PART OF  
OUR LIFE!







WEB COMIC  
UNIVERSE.COM



# ...and MORE FUN!



SEND NO MONEY

**A STICK OF GUM WITH EACH DEPOSIT!**

**CHEWING GUM MACHINE and BANK**

That's Really Works!

**FREE!**

**COMPLIMENT**

A PACKAGE OF GUM WITH EACH MACHINE

Fun for all, kiddies and grown-ups... the fascinating and sensational novelty that really works just like a real gum machine. Just insert a penny, nickel or dime in a coin slot—pull the lever and out comes a stick of real gum. It's a bank too because the money remains locked in and can only be opened with a key supplied. Made of gleaming plastic and metal in two bright colors.

Press the Button!  
Watch the wheels spin  
and "BINGO!"



**The Family's Favorite Winning Game!**

Fun Game can be had for the first time at home with all the thrills, excitement and close calls of a real BINGO GAME. Excitement at parties, games for the children and grown-ups who get their share of fun. Push the BINGO down... round and round she goes automatically and nobody knows who the next winner is. BINGO is a complete game of chance. Furnished complete with master chart, Game money of BINGO cards and chips sufficient for 15 players. Buy nothing else! Made of steel and finished with alternate shiny and dull nickel and dull satin chrome. SEND NO MONEY. Rush your order today. Remit with order and we pay postage or C.O.D. plus postage.

**\$2.98** complete with BINGO Cards and Chips

SQUEEZE ME... I COO!



Introducing **CUDDLES**

- 13 INCH LIFELIKE DOLL
- WASHABLE RUBBER WONDERSKIN
- SHE DRINKS WETS, SLEEPS, COOS

Every child's dream will come true with CUDDLES — sensational 13 inch DRINK-AND-WET DOLL of washable rubber WONDERSKIN — the amazing new lifelike doll skin! SHE COOS delightfully when you squeeze her, when you hug her. Adorable CUDDLES has long wavy hair, sparkling blue eyes that open and close. She drinks from her bottle with rubber nipple (included) and then wets her diaper. You can bathe her—move her cuddly arms, legs and head—make her walk, sleep and cool! SEND NO MONEY. (C.O.D., you pay postage. Remit with order, we pay postage.)

**\$2.98** complete

**TERRIFIC VALUE!**

**RUSH YOUR ORDER TODAY!**

## AMAZING THRILLS! CONSTRUCTION FUN!

### The New **SPIRAL SPEEDWAY!**

- Simple, fast to assemble or take apart
- Colorful wood with metal track
- Comes complete with 20" speed car
- Stands 20" high, 20" wide and 18" deep



It's a toy of never-ending fun, this new SPIRAL SPEEDWAY combines the most thrilling action with creative building fun. The whole family will be intrigued when a variable speed car spins down the multicolored incline. What a joy for every child to be able to point with pride to the SPIRAL SPEEDWAY and say "I put it together myself!" Easy to follow, illustrated instructions make it simple and fast to assemble the SPIRAL SPEEDWAY, or take it apart. Hours of entertainment, indoors and out, can be had by young and old alike with this sturdy, inexpensive SPIRAL SPEEDWAY!

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**\$2.98** complete

Imagine only

## SENSATIONAL CONTINENTAL DESIGNED NEW 1950 MOTOR CAR!!



**AMAZING DASH-BOARD CONTROL!**

Turn the key and the car is off! You can make it go whenever you wish because it's a genuine 3 gear motor car that shifts into first, second, third or reverse... And if you want to stop, keep your hand on the steering wheel and pull on your brake! It's the most state version of a grow-up convertible with all of the same features... long, slim lines, real rubber walled tires, a pleasured windshield, elegant running board, and two finest headlight covers already assembled in bright modern color... A REAL toy for Junior, and Mom and Dad too, that will ride straight into every heart! SEND NO MONEY. Rush your order today. Remit your order and we pay postage or C.O.D. plus postage.

- 5 INSIDE! CONTROLS!**
- R—REVERSE
  - N—ENGINE IDLES
  - F—FORWARD SLOW
  - FAST
  - FASTER
  - STEERING WHEEL CONTROL AND
  - BRAKE LEVER

Imagine Only **\$2.98** complete

## GLORIOUS **BLONDIE** WONDER DOLL WITH "RUBBER SKIN"



- 13 Inches High
- Lifelike Appearance
- She Can Be Washed
- She Has Moving Eyes

Here she is now, that CUDDLY HUGGABLE loveable baby Gorgeous Blondie. She is 13" high and her soft, smooth body is of REAL RUBBER WONDERSKIN. Every little mother will want Blondie for her carriage. She's got Blondie curls plenty, and they're thick and long just like real hair. Blondie's hair can be put in ribbons at night and tuck her in bed and watch her long lashes sleepily close those big blue eyes. She coos soundly till her next day of fun. Every child will have the time of her life giving her body a hard and wonderful... her soft, baby RUBBER WONDERSKIN. She's dressed in bright BIRTHDAY PARTY dress, cute mittens, shoes and stockings. Wonderful, beautiful, amazing doll in yours for an unbelievably low price. SEND NO MONEY. Remit with order and we pay postage or order C.O.D. plus postage.

EVERYBODY LOVES ME... WON'T YOU?

IMAGINE **\$2.98** ONLY complete

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Gentlemen: Please send me the following:

Enclosed find: ☐ Check or M. O. ☐ C. O. D. plus postage.

☐ SPIRAL SPEEDWAY **2.98** ☐ CUDDLES **2.98**

☐ MOTOR CAR **2.98** ☐ BINGO **2.98**

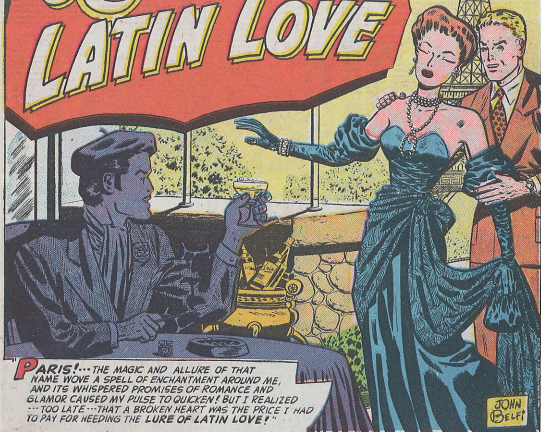
☐ GLORIOUS BLONDIE **2.98** ☐ CHEWING GUM **1.98**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

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# Lure of LATIN LOVE



**P**ARIS!...THE MAGIC AND ALLURE OF THAT NAME WOVE A SPELL OF ENCHANTMENT AROUND ME, AND ITS WHISPERED PROMISES OF ROMANCE AND GLAMOR CAUSED MY PULSE TO QUICKEN! BUT I REALIZED...TOO LATE...THAT A BROKEN HEART WAS THE PRICE I HAD TO PAY FOR HEEDING THE LURE OF LATIN LOVE!"

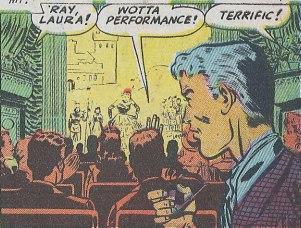
**"I'M LAURA MATTHEWS...AND PLAY-ACTING WAS ALWAYS IN MY BLOOD!"**



SO, SIR MURGATROYD! HOW NOW, THAT I FIND YOU PAYING COURT TO A MERE SERVING MAID?

WAIT, LADY MARGARET! THERE'S MORE HERE THAN MEETS THE EYE!

"THIS HAD BEEN MY BEST PERFORMANCE EVER! IT WAS CLASS NIGHT, JUST BEFORE MY COLLEGE COMMENCEMENT! AND AS THE APPLAUSE THUNDERED IN, I REALIZED I'D BEEN A SMASH HIT!"



RAY, LAURA!

WOTTA PERFORMANCE!

TERRIFIC!



"BACK IN MY DRESSING ROOM...WITH THE APPLAUSE STILL ECHOING IN MY EARS..."

OH, COME ON IN, PHIL! HOW DID I LOOK WITH THIS RED WIG?

BEAUTIFUL, LAURA! BUT I... I THINK I LIKE YOU EVEN BETTER AS YOU ARE...AS YOUR-SELF!



YES, LIKE THAT...YOU ARE LOVELY, LAURA! WHAT SAY TO CELEBRATING YOUR TRIUMPH WITH A SODA AT POP'S PLACE?

A SODA? IS THAT YOUR IDEA OF CELEBRATING? OH, WELL...

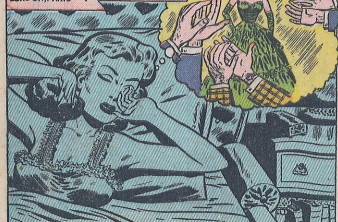


I'M REALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO COMMENCEMENT! IF I WIN THE HAWLEY PRIZE FOR SCIENTIFIC AGRICULTURE, I'M GOING TO HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY TO YOU!

YES?...IT'S TOO BAD THE COLLEGE NEVER GIVES A DRAMATIC AWARD... I'D HAVE GOTTEN ONE IF THEY DID? EVEN THE FACULTY SEEMED TO LIKE MY PERFORMANCE!

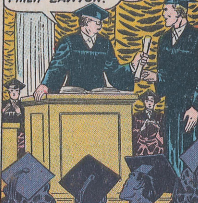


"THAT NIGHT I SLEPT FITFULLY, WAKING A DOZEN TIMES FROM DREAMS OF MYSELF AS A TRIUMPHANT STAR ON BROADWAY, IN LONDON, PARIS..."

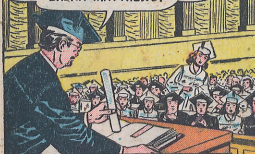


"THEN THE BIG DAY...GRADUATION!"

AND IT GIVES ME GREAT PLEASURE TO AWARD THE HAWLEY PRIZE FOR SCIENTIFIC AGRICULTURE TO... PHIL LAWTON!



NEXT I AM PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THE WINNER OF A SPECIAL FACULTY AWARD FOR DRAMATICS...A YEAR'S FREE SCHOLARSHIP IN THE DRAMA SCHOOL OF THE SORBONNE AT PARIS...MISS LAURA MATTHEWS!



"SOMEHOW, I MANAGED TO STUMBLE TO MY FEET, MY EYES BLURRED WITH HAPPY TEARS! IT WAS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE...MY FONDEST HOPE A REALITY! I WAS TO HAVE A CHANCE AT A REAL DRAMATIC CAREER...AND IN PARIS!"

"THAT NIGHT, OUTSIDE MY SORORITY HOUSE..."

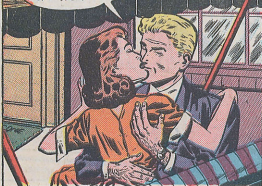
WELL, I'VE FINALLY GOTTEN WHAT I'VE AIMED AT FOR THESE LAST FOUR YEARS, LAURA! A JOB WENT WITH THE HAWLEY PRIZE... I'M TO BE THE MANAGER OF A LARGE SCIENTIFIC FARM! IT DOESN'T PAY TOO MUCH, BUT IT'S ENOUGH TO SUPPORT A WIFE ON!





"I WAS ASTONISHED, STUNNED INTO SILENCE AT HIS PROPOSAL! MISINTERPRETING MY SILENCE FOR CONSENT, PHIL SWEPT ME INTO HIS ARMS! AS HIS LIPS MET MINE..."

"OH, DARLING, I WAS AFRAID YOU'D SAY NO!"



PHIL---DON'T! YOU'RE TAKING TOO MUCH FOR GRANTED! IT'S NOT THAT I DON'T LIKE YOU---I JUST CAN'T FANCY MYSELF AS A FARMER'S WIFE! AND BESIDES, YOU KNOW ABOUT MY SORBONNE SCHOLARSHIP!

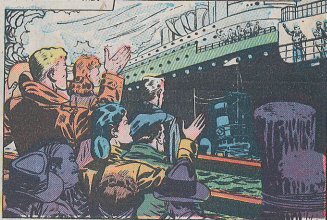
BUT---BUT I THOUGHT YOU CARED FOR ME! WE PRACTICALLY GREW UP TOGETHER, AND I THOUGHT WE BOTH TOOK IT FOR GRANTED WE'D MARRY! I NEVER DREAMED YOU WERE GOING TO TAKE THAT SCHOLARSHIP---



TAKE IT? I'M GOING TO GRAB IT, CLUTCH IT... BEFORE THEY CHANGE THEIR MINDS! WHY, IT'S THE CHANCE OF A LIFETIME! WITH A TRAINING LIKE THAT BEHIND ME, THE WORLD IS GOING TO HEAR ABOUT LAURA MATTHEWS!



"TWO WEEKS LATER I SAILED FOR FRANCE---WITH PHIL WAVING A FAITHFUL FAREWELL! IT WAS GOODBYE TO MY DRAB, UNGLAMOROUS LIFE! THE FASCINATION AND MAGNETISM OF AN ARTIST'S LIFE IN PARIS AWAITED ME!"



"LAUREL STUDIES AT THE SORBONNE WERE INSPIRING! I GAINED AN APPRECIATION OF WHAT IT TAKES TO BE A GREAT ACTRESS... AND ENJOYED EVERY MOMENT OF IT!"



NO, NO, MA CHERIE! WHEN YOU COME TO ZAT PART, YOU RAISE ZE VOICE, LIKE GO...!



"I FIND IN MY SPARE TIME, I WOULD WANDER THROUGH GAY, CAPTIVATING PARIS---ENTRANCED BY THE CAREFREE, ROMANTIC GALLIC LIFE---ENCHANTED IN A WEB OF GLAMOR!"





"THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, I KEPT GETTING LETTERS FROM PHIL, TELLING ME HOW IMPATIENT HE WAS FOR MY RETURN! BUT WHEN THE YEAR WAS UP, I WROTE HIM OF MY DECISION..."



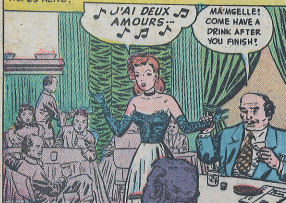
WHY... I CAN SCARCELY REMEMBER WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE... HE'S JUST A DIM MEMORY TO ME NOW! HE'S GOT TO UNDERSTAND THAT MY PROFESSIONAL CAREER REQUIRES THAT I **STAY** IN FRANCE... THE HOME OF THE ARTS!

"IN THE WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED, DISCOURAGEMENT BEGAN TO DOG MY HEELS! I MADE THE ROUNDS OF ALL THE PARIS THEATRICAL PRODUCERS, AND EVERYWHERE IT WAS THE SAME STORY, THE SAME EXCUSE..."



I AM SORRY, MADAMOISELLE... VERY SORRY! BUT YOU SEE WE HAVE NO PLACE FOR ANYONE WHO HAS NOT THE... WHAT YOU CALL IT... THE **EXPERIENCE!**

"FINALLY, DOWN TO MY LAST SOU, I DESPERATELY ACCEPTED THE ONLY JOB THAT WAS OFFERED ME... AS SINGER IN A CAFE ON THE MONTBARNASSE! THEY DON'T PAY MUCH, BUT THE PLACE WAS FREQUENTED BY THEATRICAL PEOPLE... WHICH KEPT MY HOPES ALIVE!"



♪ J'AI DEUX AMOURS... ♪

MA'NGELLE! COME HAVE A DRINK AFTER YOU FINISH!

"I MANAGED TO BRUSH OFF THE WOLVES... KEPT WAITING FOR MY CHANCE! IT CAME... IN THE PERSON OF ANDRE' LEBLANC, THE FAMED PARIS ACTOR-DIRECTOR! I WAS DETERMINED TO BRING MYSELF TO HIS ATTENTION... IN THE ONLY WAY I COULD!"



JE T'AIME, CHERI... MAIS OUI, MAIS... OUI...

BUT LUCIENNE, DARLING, I CAN'T CHANGE THE SCRIPT THE WAY YOU WANT... IT WOULD RUIN IT!

I WILL NOT DO THE PLAY AS IT IS! AND I CANNOT STAND THESE PLACES, WITH SONGS BEING SHRIEKED INTO MY EARS! I AM FINISHED WITH THE PLAY... AND WITH YOU!

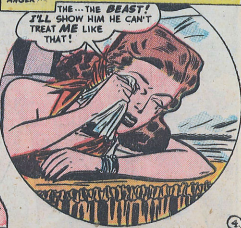
AND YOU CAN JUST TRY TO GET SOMEONE ELSE FOR THE PLAY... BECAUSE ONLY LUCIENNE ROUART CAN PLAY THAT ROLE!

WAIT, LUCI... OH, GET YOUR STUPID AMERICAN CROW'S VOICE OUT OF HERE... YOU'RE THE CAUSE OF ALL THIS!

OHNN!

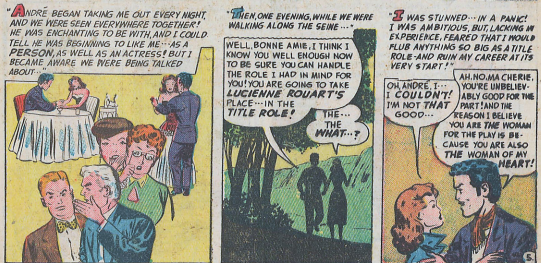
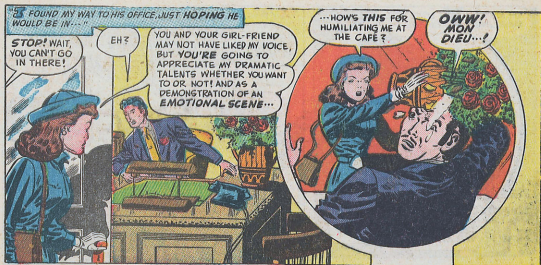


"PAIN AND HUMILIATION STABBED THROUGH ME LIKE A KNIFE, AND I RAN TO MY DRESSING ROOM, BLIND WITH TEARS! BUT THERE THE HURT GAVE WAY TO A RAGING ANGER..."

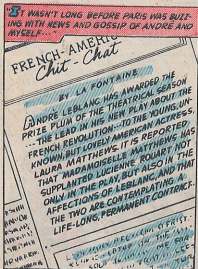
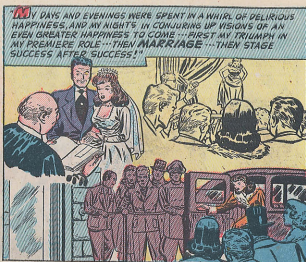
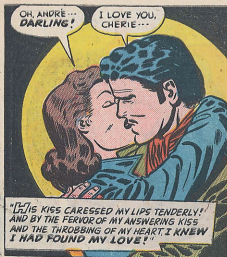


THE... THE BEAST! I'LL SHOW HIM HE CAN'T TREAT ME LIKE THAT!



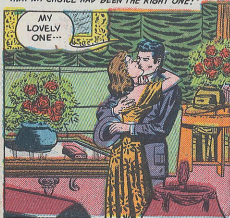








"WHEN ANDRÉ ARRIVED AND CRUSHED ME IN HIS ARMS, I REALIZED THE HUGE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HIM AND A...A FARMER LIKE PHIL! AND I KNEW THAT MY CHOICE HAD BEEN THE RIGHT ONE!"

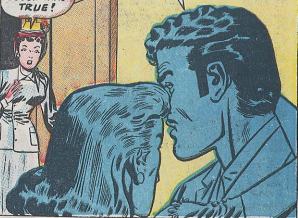


MY  
LOVELY  
ONE...

JUST THEN...

SO, ALL THAT  
GOSSIP WAS  
TRUE!

LUCIENNE!



NOT ONLY DO YOU GIVE THIS AMERICAN SNIP THE ROLE WHICH YOU PROMISED ME, BUT YOU ALSO GIVE HER THE WORDS OF LOVE WHICH YOU ONCE SWORE ONLY I WOULD EVER HEAR! YOU... YOU ROUE!

WELL, LUCIENNE, YOU WERE THE ONE WHO WALKED OUT ON ME! ...TELL ME, WHAT WOULD YOU DO TO BRING THINGS BACK TO WHERE THEY WERE BETWEEN US?

ANYTHING, MON CHER ...ANYTHING! I WILL FORGET MY TEMPERAMENT IF ONLY TO REGAIN YOUR LOVE...

LUCIENNE...THERE IS NOTHING TO REGAIN...YOU NEVER LOST IT! YOU CAN HAVE YOUR ROLE BACK...IN MY PLAY...AND IN MY HEART!



"SHE WAS PETRIFIED WITH HORROR AND SHOCK! THIS COULDN'T BE HAPPENING TO ME! THE MAN I LOVED COULDN'T BE SAYING THOSE WORDS! IT WAS ALL A MISTAKE...IT HAD TO BE!"

BUT ANDRÉ...I...I DON'T UNDERSTAND! ALL THOSE THINGS YOU TOLD ME...YOU SAID YOU LOVED ME...

YOU! YOU WERE JUST A CHEAP CAFÉ SINGER! WHY, COMPARED TO LUCIENNE, YOU'RE CRUDE, MEDIOCRE...

AHEM...EXCUSE ME, I BELIEVE I LEFT MY HAT...!



LUCKILY ENOUGH! BUT UNLUCKY FOR YOU, MISTER...BECAUSE BACK WHERE I COME FROM, MEN DON'T TRIFLE WITH WOMEN'S AFFECTIONS LIKE THAT! LAURA SAYS YOU TOLD HER YOU LOVED HER, AND IF YOU DENY IT NOW, I'LL STRIKE YOU DOWN LIKE THE DOG YOU ARE!



ER...I CAN SEE I HAVE CARRIED MY LITTLE TEST TOO FAR! YOU SEE, I WISHED TO LEARN WHETHER LAURA LOVED ME FOR MYSELF...OR FOR THE ROLE I GAVE HER! AND I COULD ONLY TELL BY HER REACTIONS...WHETHER SHE WAS MORE GRIEF-STRIKEN AT THE LOSS OF THE ROLE OR OF MY LOVE! AND SHE PROVED HERSELF, AH, HOW NOBLY!





"THERE WAS NO DOUBTING THE SINCERITY BEHIND ANDRÉ'S WORDS; MY HEART SOARED WHEN I REALIZED HE HAD ACTUALLY PROVEN HIS OWN LOVE IN HIS URGENT DESIRE TO TEST *MINE*!"



AH, DARLING, I LOVED YOU SO, I HAD TO KNOW... WILL YOU EVER FORGIVE ME FOR DOUBTING *YOU*?

WELL... WE MIGHT AS WELL GO!

"*AS* I THREW MYSELF FEVERISHLY INTO THE DAYS OF FRANTIC REHEARSALS... AND SUDDENLY, OPENING NIGHT WAS UPON ME! EVERYTHING WENT SMOOTHLY UNTIL THE REALISTIC TORCH-LIGHT PARADE TO THE GUILLOTINE... AND THEN... IT HAPPENED!"



MON DIEU!

**FIRE!**

"THE AUDIENCE WAS PANIC-STRICKEN! AND SO I TRIED TO CALM THEM BY MY OWN EXAMPLE... BY REMAINING WHERE I WAS!"



LET ME THROUGH! HURRY, YOU FOOLS, RUN!

ANDRÉ... COME BACK?... MESDAMES, MESSIEURS, PLEASE! THERE IS NO DANGER! WALK QUIETLY...



QUICK! OUT OF MY WAY! I'VE GOT TO GET TO HER!

IT'S TOO LATE! WHAT COURAGE SHE HAD... **MAGNIFIQUE!**



OH, PHIL!

QUICK, LAURA! TO THE CURTAIN... ON THE SIDE!



"SOMEHOW, PHIL MANAGED TO GET ME TO THE ROPE THAT RAISED AND LOWERED THE CURTAIN! AND THEN..."

HOLD ON TIGHT, NOW!

I... I'LL TRY!





ALL RIGHT, I'VE SET THE ROPE TO SWINGING! KEEP YOUR HEAD AGAINST MY CHEST SO YOU WON'T GET CUT BY THE GLASS WHEN WE CRASH THROUGH!



CRASH!

HURRAH!



OH, PHIL... WE MADE IT!



WHY... WHY, I'M NOT EVEN HURT! WHAT'S THE MATTER, PHIL--ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

YES, OF COURSE... BUT I'VE JUST SEEN SOMEONE WHO WON'T BE IN A FEW MINUTES!



"I WATCHED PHIL WALK OVER TO ANDRÉ, GRAB HIM! THERE WERE A FEW WORDS, AND THEN..."

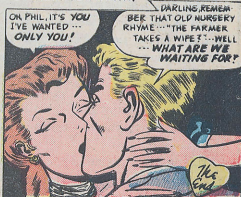
IT'S STRANGE, BUT I'M HAPPY WATCHING THAT! I--I COULDN'T HAVE EVER REALLY CARED FOR A COWARD WHO DESERTED ME IN DANGER!



I'VE WRUNG A CONFESSION OUT OF THAT WORM, LAURA! HE'D JUST BEEN USING YOU TO MAKE LUCIENNE JEALOUS AND GET HER BACK! HE EVEN STAGED THAT SCENE AT YOUR APARTMENT--HE WROTE HER TO MEET HIM THERE!

YES, I'M BEGINNING TO SEE THINGS NOW, PHIL! WHEN ANDRÉ LEFT ME TO FACE THAT FIRE ALONE, I KNEW HE DIDN'T LOVE ME! BUT YOU... YOU...

"YES, NOW I REALLY SAW THINGS AS THEY WERE... NOW MY CHILDISH INFATUATION FOR FRENCH ALLURE AND LATIN LOVE HAD BLINDED ME TO A LESS GLAMOROUS, BUT FAR MORE INTENSE AND TENDERLY SATISFYING LOVE--FOR THE BOY I'D ALWAYS KNOWN!"



OH, PHIL, IT'S YOU I'VE WANTED... ONLY YOU!

DARLING, REMEMBER THAT OLD NURSERY RHYME--"THE FARMER TAKES A WIFE"--WELL... WHAT ARE WE WAITING FOR?

The End



# IF ONLY he'd PROPOSE!

EVVA looked at Bill and felt her heart contract within her.

Bill, of course, had no idea that this date was to be anything different from the dates they had enjoyed together for the past two years. He had ordered cocktails and was busily consulting the menu as Evva looked at him.

"Bill," she said. "Darling." But she did not say these words aloud. For Evva had at last determined to do what she had so long thought of doing.

Again and again, she went over it in her mind. She was mad about Bill, really, truly, deeply in love with him. And she knew Bill was happy with her. But as for love, never a word from him! The months had grown into years and seeing Bill had become a mixture of ecstasy and torture for Evva.

"I've got to give him up!" she thought. "This can't go on . . . it *can't*! I'll find some way to tell him, to explain, without making it too hard!"

Bill had given the waiter their dinner orders, and he now faced Evva, ready for conversation. "What's on your mind, lovely?" he asked. "You've got a thundercloud in your face!"

"I'll tell him *now*!" Evva thought. "This is the time!" She smiled at him, a small forced smile. "Bill," she said, "this is going to be a bit difficult, so please be patient and listen. You see, for quite some time now, I've . . ."

"Who's a beautiful gal?" a male voice, thick and blurry cut in. "I wanna meet thish beautiful gal!"

Bill turned to the intruder, a very tipsy young man, who kept smiling at Evva.

"Why don't you go back to your table and sit down?" he suggested firmly.

"What?" The young man was incredulous. "An' leave thish beautiful gal? Here I've jush foun' the gal I've been waitin' for an' he says go away! Nothin' doin'!"

Evva watched in alarm as Bill, his jaw set, started to rise from his chair. "Bill . . . don't . . ."

"Yeshir, sweetest gal I ever saw," the tipsy young man was saying, as he started to put his arm around Evva's shoulder.

"Take your hands off her!" Bill snapped. He was out of his chair now and had the visitor by the collar. "Don't touch her!"

"Says who?" the intruder showed fight. He lunged at Bill, fist aimed at Bill's face. He never connected. With a fury that Evva had never suspected in him, Bill shot a well-aimed fist in the direction of the young man's jaw. Two waiters helped the intruder to his feet and showed him out.

Bill was breathing a bit rapidly as he resumed his seat. "I'm sorry, baby," he apologized, "but I never realized before how angry I'd get if another guy tried to step in! I think that hit me harder than anything. The circumstances aren't very romantic, Evva, but I'm trying to *propose*! Will you marry me?"

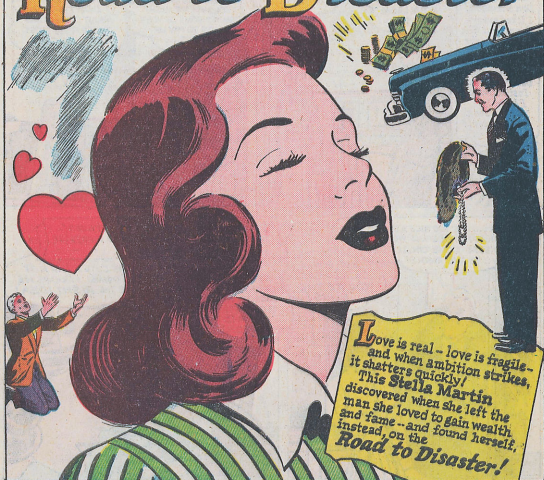
"Bill," Evva said. "*Darling!*" Only this time, she said the words aloud.

"I'm going to kiss you right now!" Bill said, doing it. "And by the way, what were you going to say when Romeo stepped in?"

"I've forgotten," Evva answered.



# Road to Disaster



**L**ove is real -- love is fragile -- and when ambition strikes, it shatters quickly! This **Stella Martin** discovered when she left the man she loved to gain wealth and fame -- and found herself, instead, on the **Road to Disaster!**

"**P**erhaps... had I known what was ahead of me... I would not have been so sure of myself that day of my graduation! But I knew only one thing -- that life was before me... and I would find **WEALTH... FAME... ROMANCE!**"

I'M THE LUCKIEST GIRL IN THE WORLD, STELLA! I'VE ALREADY GOT A JOB AS SECRETARY TO THE SALES MANAGER OF A DRUG FIRM! HOW ABOUT YOU?

I WOULDN'T TAKE A JOB LIKE THAT! DO YOU THINK I WORKED SO HARD IN SCHOOL JUST TO SPEND MY TIME IN SOME STUFFY OLD OFFICE? **NOT ME!** I WANT SOMETHING WITH A **GLAMOROUS FUTURE!**



"But what I wanted wasn't easy to find! There were plenty of jobs -- Secretary to a shirt manufacturer... typist in a meat packing plant... I laughed at these offers!"



YOU'VE BEEN JOB-HUNTING FOR MORE THAN TWO WEEKS NOW! ISN'T THERE ANYTHING YOU CAN DO, STELLA?

I'M NOT LOOKING FOR JUST ANYTHING AT ALL! I KNOW WHAT I WANT -- LISTEN TO THIS, MOTHER! **YOUNG LAWYER STARTING OWN BUSINESS SEEKS CONFIDENTIAL SECRETARY.** -- I'M GOING TO APPLY FOR **THIS JOB!**





"I applied... and got the job! From the first I liked my boss—Don Simpson! I liked everything about him... his smile... the twinkle in his eyes... his calm assurance and determination! Instinctively, I knew he would have a great career!"



"I CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY MUCH... YET! BUT YOU'LL ENJOY THE WORK... BECAUSE I INTEND TO DO THINGS IN THE LEGAL PROFESSION!"



"I WANT A JOB WITH A FUTURE, MR. SIMPSON... SO IT'S OKAY WITH ME!"



"And the work WAS inspiring! No one in need of help was ever turned away!"

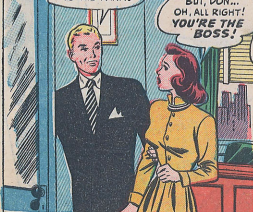
"MR. SIMPSON, THESE BILLS HAVE TO BE PAID AND THERE ISN'T ENOUGH IN THE BANK! I THOUGHT IF I MIGHT REMIND SOME OF YOUR CLIENTS TO PAY UP WHAT..."



"SHUCKS, STELLA—STOP CALLING ME MR. SIMPSON! THE NAME IS DON! AND FORGET ABOUT COLLECTING THOSE FEES! MOST OF THEM CAN'T AFFORD IT, ANYWAY!"



"BESIDES... IT'S TOO NICE A DAY TO SIT IN THIS STUFFY OFFICE AND WORRY ABOUT BUSINESS! COME ON, LET'S GO TO THE PARK!"



"BUT, DON... OH, ALL RIGHT! YOU'RE THE BOSS!"

"Don's cases were few -- and far between! Soon, going to the park became a regular part of our lives..."

"LOOK AT THIS LITTLE DEVIL! HE ISN'T AFRAID OF ANYTHING -- HE KNOWS WHAT HE WANTS AND GOES RIGHT AFTER IT! JUST LIKE A LOT OF PEOPLE!"



"HE IS CUTE... AND NOT SO DUMB! PERHAPS HE HAS THE RIGHT IDEA!"



"It was an innocent enough conversation... But that night, it came back to me... and doubts -- uneasy, restless -- came into my mind!"

"BETTER WATCH YOUR STEP, STELLA MARTIN! DON IS BECOMING MORE IMPORTANT TO YOU THAN YOUR CAREER! KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING BEFORE YOU FIND YOURSELF IN LOVE!"



"Don had a strange, joyous way about everything he did... and it was contagious! Time and time again, I would be caught up in it..."

"COME ON, STELLA -- FORGET WORK FOR AWHILE! WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A PICNIC -- ON THE ROOF!"



"BUT, DON -- THERE'S A TIME FOR PLAY AND A TIME FOR WORK! YOU'LL NEVER AMOUNT TO ANYTHING IF ---"

"I'M ENJOYING LIFE... AND THAT'S THE MOST IMPORTANT THING, STELLA! WHO WANTS TO BECOME A SLICK, MONEY-GRUBBING CORPORATION LAWYER? NOT I!"



"BUT WHAT ABOUT YOUR DREAMS OF SUCCESS, DON?"





**SUCCESS?** THAT ISN'T MEASURED BY HOW MUCH **MONEY** I CAN MAKE! I WANT TO **HELP** PEOPLE...THERE ISN'T ANYTHING MORE IMPORTANT THAN THAT!

THAT'S NOT WHAT I WANT, DON ---

*"His words shocked me -- and the doubts which had kept me awake nights were resolved at that instant! MY MIND WAS MADE UP!"*

DON... I -- **I'M LEAVING MY JOB!**

YOU'RE **JOKING**, STELLA! YOU CAN'T **REALLY** MEAN THAT! HAVE... HAVE I **DONE** SOMETHING?



NO, DON, I MEAN IT! YOU'RE A GENTLE DREAMER -- THINKING OF OTHERS MORE THAN YOU DO OF YOURSELF! BUT THAT ISN'T THE KIND OF LIFE I WANT! I... I'M LIKE THAT LITTLE PIGEON IN THE PARK WHO KNOWS WHAT HE WANTS -- **AND GOES OUT TO GET IT!**

DON'T LEAVE ME, STELLA! I'LL BE **LOST** WITHOUT YOU!

THERE ARE OTHER SECRETARIES... WHO... WHO...

**OTHER SECRETARIES?** IT'S **YOU** I WANT! DON'T YOU KNOW THAT I **LOVE** YOU?



*"His lips found mine... and I felt the world... and all my careful plans with it -- melt away and vanish like a puff of smoke!"*

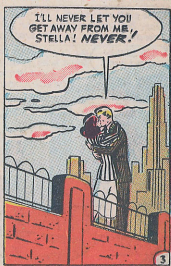
OH, DON... **DON!** I DIDN'T REALIZE HOW MUCH I LOVED YOU!

I WANT YOU TO **MARRY** ME, STELLA!



BUT WE... WE CAN'T THINK OF MARRIAGE! YOU CAN'T SUPPORT A WIFE ON THE **MONEY** YOU MAKE!

I'LL WORK MY HEAD OFF! I'LL EARN **MORE** THAN ENOUGH FOR US!



I'LL NEVER LET YOU GET AWAY FROM ME, STELLA! **NEVER!**



"There was no sleep for me that night...all the stars in the universe whispered softly to me! I WAS IN LOVE!"

I DIDN'T DREAM IT COULD HAPPEN TO ME! NOTHING CAN STOP US NOW... WORKING TOGETHER, LOVING EACH OTHER THE WAY WE DO! HE'LL BE A GREAT LAWYER... AND I'LL BE AT HIS SIDE!



"Don seemed a new man... with a new determination! Soon..."

DARLING, YOU DON'T KNOW HOW **AMBITIOUS** YOU'VE MADE ME! I'M GOING TO GET A REALLY IMPORTANT CASE... THE CHAIN STORE CORPORATION MATTER!

WHY, THAT SOUNDS **BIG** - AND **IMPORTANT**! I'M HAPPY FOR YOU, DON - FOR BOTH OF US!



I'M GOING TO HAVE A CONFERENCE ON THE CASE TOMORROW... BUT WHERE ARE YOU GOING --?

I'M TAKING THE REST OF THE DAY OFF! I'VE GOT A FEW THINGS TO DO -- FOR TOMORROW!



"I knew how important it was for Don to make the right impression on the corporation's representative! I hurried to my bank, and withdrew my carefully hoarded savings..."



I'LL TAKE **ALL** OF THESE! MY FIANCEE IS THE ATTORNEY FOR THE CHAIN STORE CORPORATION, YOU KNOW... AND I MUST DRESS THE PART!



"My next stop was the beauty parlor..."

AH, MISS STELLA... SOMETHING IS HAPPEN TO YOU! YOUR EYES, THEY ARE SHINING LIKE DIAMONDS!

YOU'RE RIGHT, ANTOINETTE! I'M IN LOVE WITH THE MOST WONDERFUL MAN IN THE WORLD! SOMEDAY, YOU'LL SEE HIS PICTURE IN ALL THE PAPERS... WHEN HE GOES INTO POLITICS! BUT NOW I MUST LOOK MY BEST FOR TOMORROW'S CONFERENCE!



"The next morning, I hurried to the office, my heart beating wildly-- for I knew that at last, Don and I were on our way to success!"

I'M SORRY I'M LATE!

OH, COME IN, DEAR! I WANT YOU TO MEET MRS. MARIETTI! IT'S ABOUT THE CHAIN STORE CORPORATION CASE!



MRS. MARIETTI OWNS A SMALL GROCERY WHICH THE CHAIN STORE PEOPLE ARE TRYING TO TAKE OVER-- BY BREAKING HER LEASE SO THAT SHE'LL HAVE TO MOVE OUT! I'M GOING TO STOP THEM!

BUT... BUT... I THOUGHT...





"So that was his **BIG** case--his **IMPORTANT** case! When the old woman had finally left..."

HOW COULD YOU **DO** THIS TO ME, DON? I THOUGHT YOU WERE REPRESENTING THE **CORPORATION!**

THE **CORPORATION?** BUT YOU KNOW I COULDN'T DO **THAT!** WHY... THEY'RE TRYING TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS POOR OLD LADY! STELLA, IT'S A MATTER OF **JUSTICE**...

**JUSTICE, DON? AND WHERE IS JUSTICE FOR ME? CAN YOU EAT JUSTICE? PAY THE RENT WITH IT? RAISE A FAMILY WITH IT? JUSTICE IS FINE--BUT YOU'RE IN BUSINESS FOR FEES!**

PLEASE DON'T SAY IT LIKE THAT, STELLA! EVEN IF YOU **ARE** RIGHT!

CLIENTS WHO PAY BIG FEES DON'T COME TO **ME!** LIKE MRS. MARIETTI! AND I CAN'T REFUSE TO HELP THEM! MAYBE YOU'D BE BETTER OFF **WITHOUT** ME!

DON'T... DON'T SAY THAT!

"My heart went out to him... I rushed into his arms and covered his face with kisses!"

I'LL DO EVERYTHING YOU SAY, STELLA! I'LL TAKE THE NEXT BIG CASE THAT COMES ALONG!

DARLING, CASES WHICH PAY WELL DON'T JUST WALK INTO THE OFFICE! WE MUST GO **AFTER** THEM!

"It was the next day that I remembered my advice to Don-- that we 'had to go after the cases we wanted!' And what reminded me was a headline in the papers..."

THERE'S A CASE, DON! WHY CAN'T YOU GO AFTER STEVE HEGEN? HE COULD USE A LAWYER LIKE YOU!

THAT RACKETEER? HE'S PROBABLY AS GUILTY AS THEY COME! AND BESIDES, HE HAS A LAWYER--ONE OF THE SHREWDEST AND SHADIEST IN THE COUNTRY!

BUT THAT'S JUST THE POINT! WITH THAT KIND OF LAWYER--ONE WHO IS ALREADY UNDER SUSPICION-- STEVE HEGEN WON'T STAND A CHANCE IN COURT! BUT WITH YOU TO DEFEND HIM--

IT'S NO USE TALKING ABOUT IT, STELLA! I COULDN'T EVEN GET HEGEN ON THE PHONE... MUCH LESS HAVE HIM WALK INTO MY OFFICE!

"Having Steve Hegen come to US wasn't what I had in mind! I decided to go AFTER him... AND GET THE CASE FOR DON!"

I'M SORRY... MR. HEGEN SEES NO ONE WITHOUT AN APPOINTMENT!

BUT I'M HERE FOR ATTORNEY DON SIMPSON--IT'S VERY IMPORTANT! IT... IT CONCERNS MR. HEGEN'S PRESENT--ER--CASE!

STEVE HEGEN  
AMUSEMENT  
ENTERPRISES



"It worked... and soon I was shown into Steve Hegen's private office! Quietly, he heard me out..."

EVERY JUDGE IN THESE PARTS KNOWS THAT **DON SIMPSON** WOULDN'T TAKE A CASE UNLESS HE WAS POSITIVE HIS CLIENT IS **INNOCENT!** HE CAN WIN-- DEPEND ON IT!

IT WON'T BE **THAT EASY!** THE MAIN WITNESS AGAINST ME, **GEORGE HEINZ**, WILL SWEAR THAT I'M INVOLVED IN THIS NUMBERS RACKET!

HE'LL BE LYING, OF COURSE, BECAUSE HE HATES ME AND WANTS TO GET ME IN TROUBLE! BUT HOW CAN I **PROVE IT?**

TALK IT OVER WITH **DON SIMPSON**, **MR. HEGEN!** HE'LL PROVE YOUR **INNOCENCE!**



**YOU'VE SOLD ME, YOUNG LADY!** LET'S GO AND SEE YOUR LAWYER! I HAVEN'T MUCH TIME TO GET MY CASE PREPARED!



"On the way, I barely heard Hegen's polite attempts to make conversation! All I thought of was that this case surely would be the making of Don... of the fee... of more cases coming to him!"

DON... I'VE BROUGHT MR. HEGEN TO SEE YOU ABOUT HIS CASE! I WAS SURE THAT YOU COULD HELP HIM!

YOU'VE GOT QUITE A GIRL WORKING FOR YOU, MR. SIMPSON! I LIKE HER IDEA--AND I THINK WE CAN DO BUSINESS!



"My heart froze within me when I saw the expression that came over Don's face! He turned to Hegen, his voice full of a terrible controlled fury!"

I DON'T DO BUSINESS WITH SWINKS LIKE YOU! I DON'T DEFEND THE GUILTY! I'D RATHER **STARVE** THAN TAKE A FEE FROM YOUR KIND! **GET OUT!**

I'LL GO--BUT YOU'RE A YOUNG FOOL, SIMPSON!



"As Hegen turned to leave, I saw all my dreams crumble into dust! My future of ease, comfort, position, would never come... I knew that on the instant! An anger swept over me like a hot flame!"

TELL **ME** TO GO, TOO, DON! AFTER ALL, I ASKED MR. HEGEN TO COME HERE! WHY DON'T YOU CALL **ME** THE NAMES YOU CALLED HIM? YOU'VE SMASHED MY HOPES FOR SUCCESS--GRIND YOUR HEEL INTO THEM NOW!

YOU DIDN'T REALIZE WHAT YOU WERE DOING, STELLA!





YOU'RE RIGHT! I DIDN'T KNOW WHAT I WAS DOING... BUT I DO KNOW **NOW!** HERE... TAKE YOUR RING BACK! **I NEVER WANT TO SEE YOU AGAIN!**



"I stormed furiously out of the office! The next thing I knew, I was home in bed... crying out all the pain in my heart!"



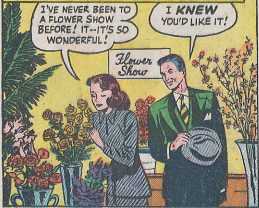
"Next day - a telephone call! I heard Steve Hegen's soothing voice invite me out to dinner... What did he want of me? I'd soon learn..."

IF NOT FOR ME, YOU AND DON WOULDN'T HAVE BROKEN UP! I'LL TRY TO MAKE IT UP TO YOU -- **SOMEHOW!**

IT -- IT WAS COMING ANYWAY, STEVE!



"But he felt it was his responsibility! He started taking me places -- and as the pain in my heart grew less -- Steve Hegen gradually began to loom larger in my mind!"

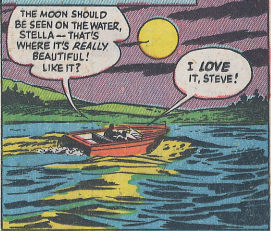


I'VE NEVER BEEN TO A FLOWER SHOW BEFORE! IT -- IT'S SO WONDERFUL!

I **KNEW** YOU'D LIKE IT!

*Flower Show*

"I still remember that throbbing night on the day --"



THE MOON SHOULD BE SEEN ON THE WATER, STELLA -- THAT'S WHERE IT'S REALLY BEAUTIFUL! LIKE IT?

I **LOVE** IT, STEVE!

"He let the motor idle -- placed his arm about my shoulders..."

I BROUGHT YOU OUT HERE BECAUSE I HAD TO ASK YOU SOMETHING! FROM THE MOMENT I FIRST MET YOU, I KNEW YOU WERE MY KIND OF WOMAN! WILL YOU **MARRY ME?**

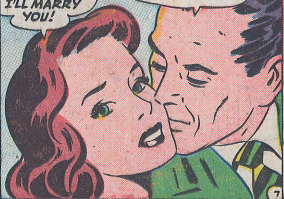
I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY, STEVE...



"Before my eyes, Don's smiling face rose -- but I brushed it away! It was **STEVE** who was beside me..."

I... I LIKE YOU A LOT, STEVE! YES -- **I'LL MARRY YOU!**

**DARLING!** I WAS HOPING YOU'D SAY THAT!





"The days passed swiftly after that! Steve deluged me with gifts... and I built my beautiful castles in the air! Don was almost forgotten... **ALMOST**... until..."



STELLA! WAIT... I HAVE TO SEE YOU... TALK TO YOU!

DON! OH--  
DON!

I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN GOING OUT WITH STEVE HEGEN--AND YOU **MUSTN'T!** HE'S NO GOOD--A HARD, RUTHLESS RACKETEER! HE'LL ONLY CAUSE YOU PAIN... AND BESIDES... OH, STELLA, **I LOVE YOU!**

HOW CAN YOU SAY SUCH THINGS ABOUT STEVE, DON? **HE** HEALED THE PAIN **YOU** CAUSED ME!



YOU'RE NOT ONLY JEALOUS OF HIM -- YOU'RE ENVIOUS BECAUSE **HE'S A SUCCESS!**  
**GOODBYE!**

YOU'RE MAKING--  
A TERRIBLE  
MISTAKE!



"I hurried into my house quickly... to hide the tears that welled up in my eyes! Steve was waiting for me--and one look at his face made me forget my own troubles!"

WHAT'S THE **MATTER?**  
YOU LOOK...  
YOU LOOK  
AS IF ---

--AS IF THE WORLD WAS COMING TO AN END? YES, IT **IS**, FOR ME! MY LAWYER TELLS ME I'LL LOSE MY CASE UNLESS I CAN MAKE HEINZ TELL THE TRUTH INSTEAD OF LIES! HE'LL BE THE MAIN WITNESS AGAINST ME AT MY TRIAL!



TO GO TO PRISON **NOW...**  
TO LOSE YOU... I CAN'T BEAR THE THOUGHT OF IT!

OH, STEVE! IF THERE WAS ONLY SOMETHING I COULD **DO** FOR YOU!



THERE **IS** SOMETHING YOU CAN DO, STELLA! IF YOU'D ONLY GO TO HEINZ -- PLEAD WITH HIM TO TELL THE TRUTH... FOR THE SAKE OF OUR LOVE...

**I'LL DO IT!**  
I'LL BE THERE  
AT TWO  
O'CLOCK!

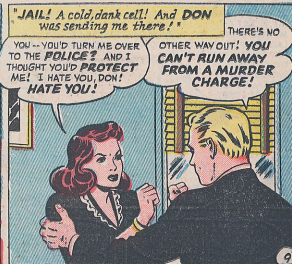


"I took a cab to the address Steve gave me! There was no answer when I rang the bell... but the door was slightly open! I entered... INTO A NIGHTMARE OF HORROR!"



OH-HH!







**"PRISON!"**

And I, Stella Martin, an accused murderess!

Tears, emotion... all were drained from me! In a daze, I seemed to awaken ages later, when the cell door suddenly opened...

**DON!** WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHY DID YOU COME?

**I'M YOUR ATTORNEY, STELLA!** HEGEN HAS SENT THE PHOTOGRAPHS TO THE POLICE... ANONYMOUSLY, OF COURSE! I WANT YOU TO TELL THE TRUTH IN COURT TOMORROW... THE WHOLE TRUTH... EVERYTHING FROM THE BEGINNING, EXACTLY AS IT HAPPENED!

BUT... WHY DID YOU TAKE MY CASE? I HAVE NO MONEY...

YOU KNOW IT ISN'T A FEE THAT I WORK FOR--OR HAVE YOU ALREADY FORGOTTEN? I WANT TO HELP THOSE IN NEED OF HELP... I WANT TO SEE JUSTICE CARRIED OUT! THAT WAS THE VERY THING YOU TRIED TO TAKE AWAY FROM ME!

"Dimly, I heard his words... and for the first time, I began to UNDERSTAND! I thanked my lucky stars that I had never succeeded in destroying Don's ideals! They were my shield and protection in court..."

YOU'VE HEARD THE DEFENDANT'S STORY--AND I CAN PROVE THAT HEGEN PLANNED EVERY DETAIL OF THE TRAP INTO WHICH SHE WAS LURED--INCLUDING THE MURDER OF GEORGE HEINZ! YOU SEE, I SUSPECTED THAT HE'D TRY TO USE STELLA MARTIN! -- SO I HIRED PRIVATE DETECTIVES TO DOG HIS EVERY STEP! THEY FOLLOWED HIM TO HEINZ'S HOME--AND SAW HIM COMMIT THE MURDER BEFORE SHE ARRIVED!

"It was a stunning surprise, and the court was in an uproar! As the witnesses rammed home the case against Hegen, I knew that I was free! And I knew that Don loved me... had never stopped loving me--and that I loved him!"

OH, DARLING, DARLING! WHY DID YOU FRIGHTEN ME SO? WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL ME?

I HAD TO KEEP IT SECRET, STELLA! AND HEGEN TRAPPED HIMSELF! I COULD HAVE DEFENDED HIM--BUT I KNEW THAT SOMEONE WOULD STILL HAVE TO PAY FOR HEINZ'S MURDER EVEN IF I DID SAVE HIM FROM THE CHARGE AGAINST HIM! HE'D HAVE TURNED YOU OVER TO THE POLICE ANYWAY!

CAN YOU FORGIVE ME, DEAR? FORGIVE ME MY REAL CRIME... MY LACK OF FAITH IN YOU?... AND I KNOW NOW THAT WITHOUT PRINCIPLE, WITHOUT HONESTY, THERE CAN BE NO REAL LOVE!

I WON'T HOLD YOUR MISTAKES AGAINST YOU! BUT SINCE YOU ARE GUILTY, WE'LL ASK THE JUDGE FOR HIS OPINION!

"My heart was laughing joyously as we turned to the judge! Don was his gay self again... and as always, he pulled me along into his mood!"

WE'RE BOTH GUILTY OF BEING VERY MUCH IN LOVE, YOUR HONOR!

IN THAT CASE, I'LL GIVE YOU BOTH A LIFE SENTENCE! STEP UP AND I'LL MARRY YOU!

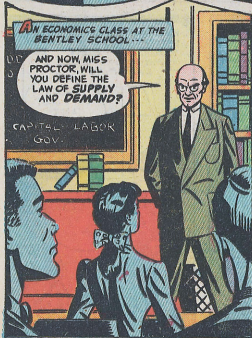
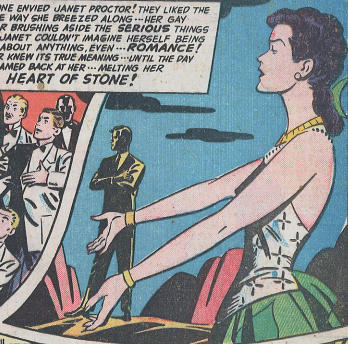
The END



# HEART of STONE



EVERYONE ENVIED JANET PROCTOR! THEY LIKED THE CAREFREE WAY SHE BREEZED ALONG...HER GAY LAUGHTER BRUSHING ASIDE THE **SERIOUS** THINGS IN LIFE! JANET COULDN'T IMAGINE HERSELF BEING SERIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING, EVEN...**ROMANCE!** SHE NEVER KNEW ITS TRUE MEANING...UNTIL THE DAY LOVE FLAMED BACK AT HER...MELTING HER **HEART OF STONE!**



AN ECONOMICS CLASS AT THE BENTLEY SCHOOL...

AND NOW, MISS PROCTOR, WILL YOU DEFINE THE LAW OF SUPPLY AND DEMAND?

CAPITAL LABOR GOV.



WELL, IN MY OPINION, IT'S SIMPLY... SIMPLY...**HA!** **HA!**...I MEAN, IT'S...**HA!** **HA!**



PARDON ME, MISS PROCTOR... BUT I DON'T QUITE SEE WHY MY QUESTION IS SO AMUSING TO YOU!



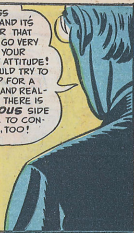
HA! HA!... SUPPLY AND DEMAND! I JUST THOUGHT OF HOW SIMPLE IT IS!... REALLY!... WHY... IT WORKS RIGHT HERE IN SCHOOL!



DON'T YOU SEE? IT'S LIKE SCHOOL... THE MORE I GET OF IT, THE LESS I VALUE IT! ISN'T THAT CLEAR, PROFESSOR STEVENS?



YES, MISS PROCTOR, AND IT'S ALSO CLEAR THAT YOU WON'T GO VERY FAR WITH YOUR PRESENT ATTITUDE! YOU SHOULD TRY TO GROW UP FOR A CHANGE, AND REALIZE THAT THERE IS A SERIOUS SIDE OF LIFE TO CONSIDER, TOO!

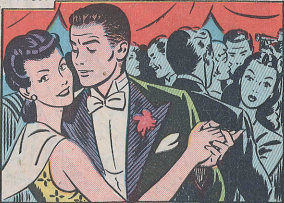


"IT'S BITING WORDS DIDN'T SEEM TO BOTHER ME AT ALL... I'D BEEN TOLD THE SAME THING BY OTHERS, BUT WHAT DID I CARE! AFTER ALL... IT WAS MY ATTITUDE TOWARD LIFE... NEVER TAKING THINGS SERIOUSLY... LIKE THE TIME AT THE SENIOR PROM, WHEN..."

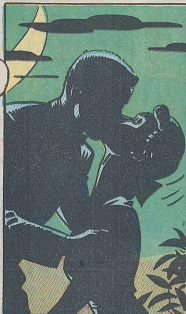


CLASS IS DISMISSED!

"...HE HAD THE PRIZE DATE... BILL WESTON, CAPTAIN OF THE FOOTBALL TEAM... THE MOST SOUGHT-AFTER MAN ON THE CAMPUS!"



I HOPE YOU'RE ENJOYING THE DANCE, JANET! YOU KNOW, IT'S NOT EVERY GIRL THAT GETS TO DATE A POPULAR GUY LIKE ME... ESPECIALLY ON A NIGHT LIKE THIS... WITH THAT MOON... AND...



WELL, WHAT DO YOU SAY TO THAT? AREN'T YOU LUCKY TO... HUH? ...WHY... YOU'RE... LAUGHING!



S-SORRY, BUT I JUST CAN'T HELP IT!



"STRANGE...EVERY OTHER GIRL AT BENTLEY WOULD HAVE SWOONED AT HIS VERY TOUCH, BUT I...I LAUGHED!"



"THEN CAME GRADUATION DAY! AND I HEADED INTO THE WORLD TOWARDS THE ONLY THING I COULD REGARD SERIOUSLY... MY LIVELIHOOD!"



"I GOT A JOB AS SALESCLERK AT THE BIRDWELL DEPARTMENT STORE..."



"Later...in the employees' lounge..."



"ANY GIRL? IT DIDN'T SEEM POSSIBLE THAT ROMANCE COULD FAIL TO LEAVE AN IMPRESSION ON VIBRANT YOUTH...BUT THEN THERE WAS JANET PROCTOR! SOMEHOW... I FELT DIFFERENTLY!"





"JOHNNY MERTON SEEMED LIKE A NICE FELLOW... BUT NOTHING TO RAVE ABOUT! HE WAS JUST A TYPICAL BRIGHT EFFICIENCY BOY!"



THERE HE IS NOW, JANET!...

I'D BE **MORE** THRILLED IF HE NOTICES ME ENOUGH TO GIVE ME A **PROMOTION!**

WELL... DON'T YOU THINK HE'S SIMPLY **THRILLING?**

"MY HEART WAS SINGING... I **KNEW** I'D GET **PROMOTED SOMEHOW!** THEN... SEVERAL DAYS LATER, WHILE ON MY WAY TO LUNCH..."

OH--HELLO, MR. MERTON!... I WAS JUST GOING OUT TO LUNCH AND...

MISS PROCTOR... UH... JANET... MAY I TAKE YOU TO LUNCH TODAY? THERE ARE SEVERAL DEPARTMENTAL PROBLEMS I'D LIKE TO TALK OVER WITH YOU... PERHAPS YOU CAN HELP ME SOLVE THEM!



"IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE HE **DID** NOTICE ME! ONE AFTERNOON..."



MISS PROCTOR... I WANT TO COMPLIMENT YOU ON THE WAY YOU'VE BEEN HANDLING YOUR WORK! I'M TURNING IN AN EXCELLENT REPORT ON YOUR PROGRESS!

THANK YOU, MR. MERTON!

"I WAS SO BUSY TELLING HIM MY IDEAS FOR IMPROVING THE DEPARTMENT THAT I HARDLY ATE ANY LUNCH... AND NEITHER DID JOHNNY!"



...AND ANOTHER THING, MR. MERTON, I THINK THE SECOND SECTION SHOULD DISPLAY ONLY **BLUE** TIES AND...

UH... YES, YES... **DEFINITELY BLUE!** I'VE NEVER NOTICED THEM BEFORE... BUT YOUR **EYES** ARE THE DEEPEST BLUE I'VE EVER SEEN!

"THERE WERE LOTS OF DATES WITH JOHNNY AFTER THAT! HE ALWAYS SEEMED TO HAVE SOME **BUSINESS PROBLEMS** TO TALK OVER WITH ME!"



"ONE NIGHT... FOLLOWING A DINNER ENGAGEMENT... WE WERE TAKING A STROLL THROUGH THE PARK..."

...NOW IF YOU COULD TRANSFER THAT SURPLUS MERCHANDISE AND...



UH... LET'S SIT DOWN HERE FOR A MOMENT AND... AND FORGET TALKING ABOUT THAT CONFOUNDED **BUSINESS** FOR A CHANGE! IS THAT **ALL** YOU'RE INTERESTED IN?

BUT MR. MERTON, I... I DON'T SEEM TO UNDERSTAND...

ALL THESE WEEKS WE'VE BEEN TOGETHER... COULDN'T YOU **TELL**... HAVEN'T YOU **GUESSED** THAT... THAT...







MR. MERTON!  
PLEASE DON'T...

JANET!  
I LOVE YOU!

"AGAIN...THE SAME STRANGE COMPULSION OF FOOLISH LAUGHTER CAME OVER ME!"



PLEASE, STOP IT!  
ALL THIS IS SO...  
RIDICULOUS!

WHY...YOU'RE LAUGHING  
AT ME! WHAT'S SO FUNNY  
ABOUT A MAN BEING IN LOVE  
WITH A GIRL? AND WHY  
LAUGH AT HIM WHEN  
HE TRIES TO KISS HER?  
DON'T YOU EVEN LIKE  
ME, JANET?

OF COURSE I DO, MR. MERTON...  
UH...JOHNNY...BUT LOVE  
SEEMS LIKE SUCH A WASTE  
OF TIME!  
AFTER ALL, WE DO  
HAVE BUSINESS  
TO DISCUSS!

BUSINESS...BUSINESS...  
THAT'S ALL YOU CARE ABOUT!  
WELL, I'M GLAD I  
FOUND OUT HOW  
STONE-HEARTED

YOU ARE BEFORE IT WAS  
TOO LATE! YOU'RE NOT A  
WOMAN--YOU'RE  
A BUSINESS  
MACHINE!  
GOODBYE,  
MISS PROCTOR!

"THAT NIGHT, I COULDN'T SLEEP  
FOR HOURS! FOR THE FIRST TIME,  
I BEGAN TO WONDER WHETHER  
OR NOT JOHNNY WAS RIGHT  
ABOUT ME! MAYBE IT WAS  
MY FAULT--LAUGHING AT TOO  
MUCH IN LIFE! I WONDERED..."



NEXT DAY...AT THE STORE...



JOHNNY,  
I...I JUST  
WANT TO TELL  
YOU THAT...

I'M SORRY, MISS PROCTOR,  
BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO REFER  
YOUR PROBLEMS TO  
THE NEW SUPERVISOR  
WHEN HE COMES IN!...  
I'VE BEEN TRANSFERRED  
TO ANOTHER  
DIVISION!



JANET...DID YOU  
HEAR? MR. MERTON  
APPLIED FOR A TRANSFER  
TO THE CREDIT  
DEPARTMENT, AND HE'S  
RECOMMENDED YOU  
TO BE SECTION HEAD!  
ISN'T THAT WONDER-  
FUL?

GOLLY...A BIG  
PROMOTION  
LIKE THAT!  
ARE YOU  
LUCKY!

EMPLOYEES  
LOUNGE

"LUCKY? IT  
WAS MORE THAN  
I HAD EVER  
DARED HOPE FOR  
--LIKE A DREAM  
COME TRUE!  
YET SOME-  
HOW--INSTEAD  
OF BLISSFUL  
ELATION, I  
FOUND MY  
LIFE STRANGELY  
EMPTY--A  
PECULIAR  
SENSE OF  
LOSS  
GRIPPED ME!  
I KEPT BUSY  
AT MY WORK  
--TRYING TO  
SUBMERGE  
THAT  
FEELING..."



MISS GRANT,  
WILL YOU PLEASE  
FILE THESE  
REPORTS?

YES,  
MISS  
PROCTOR!

MISS J. PROCTOR



BUT HARD WORK DIDN'T SEEM TO HELP! DURING THE LONG NIGHTS THAT FOLLOWED EACH OTHER ENDLESSLY, MY HEART BECAME A DEEP WELL OF LONELINESS... FILLING MY EYES WITH HOT TEARS I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND!"



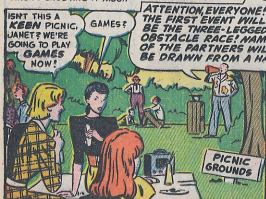
ONE NIGHT... AFTER HOURS OF FITFUL TOSSING... I WAS CONSCIOUS OF MY PRECIOUS SLEEP BEING STIRRED BY A DISTURBING DREAM..."



"I AWOKED WITH A START... A HOT, ANGRY FLUSH SWEEPING MY CHEEKS... SEARING MY HEART? WAS THAT ME I SAW IN THAT DREAM?... ME, RUNNING AFTER JOHNNY MERTON?... IT WAS UTTERLY RIDICULOUS!"



THAT'S HOW THINGS WERE WHEN THE DAY OF OUR ANNUAL EMPLOYEES' OUTING ARRIVED! SOMEHOW, I WASN'T ENJOYING IT MUCH..."



THE FIRST NAMES RANG OUT... AND A HOT FLUSH SEARED MY COUNTENANCE! THIS COULDN'T BE! JOHNNY AND I HATED EACH OTHER, DIDN'T WE? AND NOW THEY WERE GOING TO... TIE US TOGETHER!"



THINGS HAPPENED FAST... AND THERE DIDN'T SEEM TO BE ANYTHING EITHER OF US COULD DO ABOUT IT!"





"**WE** DIDN'T EXCHANGE A WORD AS WE STUMBLERD AWKWARDLY THROUGH THE WOODS TOGETHER...UNTIL SUDDENLY I TRIPPED!"



OOOPS...  
THAT  
BRANCH...

HEY...  
LOOK  
OUT!

I...I'VE SPRAINED MY ANKLE A LITTLE! IT'S NOTHING MUCH...I CAN MAKE IT BACK!

NONSENSE! I'LL **CARRY** YOU BACK, JANET...WE CAN'T TAKE A CHANCE MAKING IT WORSE!

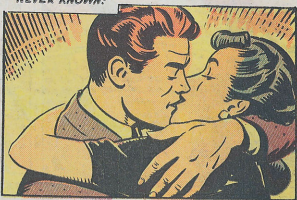


"**N**ESTLED IN HIS ARMS, I SUDDENLY FOUND MYSELF LIKING THE SENSATION OF CLOSENESS...THAT FEELING OF NEARNESS TO JOHNNY THAT SURGED UP WITHIN ME! UNCONSCIOUSLY, MY ARMS TIGHTENED ABOUT HIM..."

"**T**HE WORLD MELTED AROUND ME...LIFTING MY SOUL TO AN ECSTASY I'D NEVER KNOWN! IN THAT MOMENT, MY HEART FELT A SUDDEN AWAKENING...AND I KNEW THAT **THIS** WAS WHAT I HAD ALWAYS WANTED...**THIS WAS A LOVE I HAD NEVER KNOWN!**"



WE LOST THE RACE, BUT...SOMEHOW IT DOESN'T SEEM TO **MATTER!**



"**T**HEN, SUDDENLY, I FOUND MYSELF SHOCKED INTO A REALITY THAT STUNNED MY SENSES!"

"**T**HERE WAS ONLY THE AGONIZED THUD OF MY HEART AS I STOOD THERE HELPLESSLY...WATCHING JOHNNY LEAVE ME...TAKING AWAY THE LOVE I HAD GIVEN HIM!"

"**N**OW IT WAS TOO LATE! DAZED WITH THE THOUGHT THAT I HAD LOST HIM FOREVER, I KNEW THAT I HAD TO RUN SOMEWHERE...**ANYWHERE!** A MAD PANIC SEIZED ME--PLUMBING ME HEAD-  
LONG INTO THE WOODS!"



OH, DARLING, I...JOHNNY! YOU...YOU'RE LAUGHING AT ME!

**HA! HA! SURE** I AM! I ONLY KISSED YOU TO **TEST** MYSELF --TO SEE WHETHER I'D GOTTEN OVER MY LOVE FOR YOU!! I **HAVE**... AND **NOW** I CAN LAUGH AT YOU FOR A CHANGE!



JOHNNY... PLEASE COME BACK... PLEASE...OH...HE'S GONE!



I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY...  
**GET AWAY!**



"IT SEEMED LIKE HOURS THAT I RAN THROUGH THE WOODS! THEN, SUDDENLY, I FOUND MYSELF SURROUNDED BY A WALL OF FLAME... A FOREST FIRE! MY MIND FLASHED BACK TO THE SMOKE WE HAD SEEN BEFORE THE RACE--AND NOW I WAS ENGULFED IN IT!"



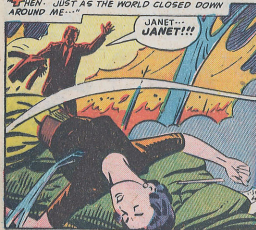
"OH! ... THAT FIRE! AND I... I'VE RUN SQUARELY INTO IT!"

"HOT FLAMES LICKED CLOSER AS THE RING OF FIRE TIGHTENED AROUND ME! THERE WAS NO ESCAPE... I WAS TRAPPED! I HUGGED THE GROUND... FEELING MYSELF GROW WEAKER... WEAKER..."

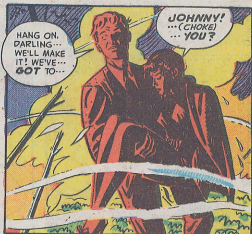


"IT... IT'S NO USE (GASP)... I'M GOING TO... DIE... HERE!"

"THEN... JUST AS THE WORLD CLOSED DOWN AROUND ME..."



"JANET... JANET!!!"



"HANG ON, DARLING... WE'LL MAKE IT! WE'VE GOT TO..."

"JOHNNY! ... (CHOKES) ... YOU?"

"THROUGH A FIERY FURNACE ... WITH DEATH THREATENING AT EACH STEP! AND FINALLY... SAFETY!"



"YOU'RE SAFE NOW, JANET!"

"SAFE? DO YOU EXPECT THANKS FOR GIVING ME FROM A LIFE NO LONGER WORTH LIVING? DON'T RUB IT IN, JOHNNY! YOU'VE SHOWN ME UP FOR WHAT I AM ... NOW STOP TORTURING ME AND GET OUT OF MY LIFE FOREVER!"

"BUT JOHNNY WASN'T LISTENING TO ME! HE WAS TAKING ME IN HIS ARMS... TELLING ME WHAT I HAD LOST HOPE OF EVER HEARING AGAIN!"

"BUT, JANET DARLING... CAN'T YOU READ WHAT'S IN MY HEART? I HAD TO TREAT YOU AS I DID... IF ONLY TO MAKE YOU SEE WHAT WAS IN YOUR OWN HEART! DON'T YOU SEE THAT... I'VE LOVED YOU AND ALWAYS WILL?"

"OH... JOHNNY, DEAR... I... I'VE BEEN SO FOOLISH ABOUT EVERYTHING... ALL MY LIFE! BUT NOW... NOW THAT I'VE FINALLY FOUND TRUE LOVE... I PROMISE NEVER TO LAUGH AT IT AGAIN!"

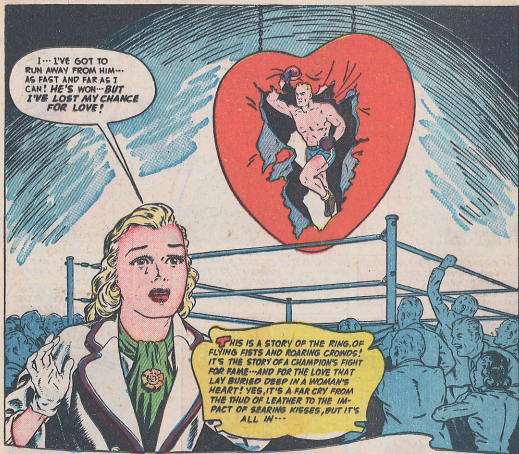


"I COULDN'T LAUGH THEN... EVEN IF I WANTED TO! MY PAST LIFE FADED AWAY... AND ALL I COULD FEEL WAS THE WONDERFUL THRILL OF JOHNNY'S LOVE... AND MINE!"

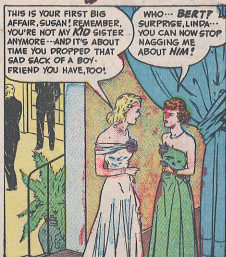


"DARLING..."





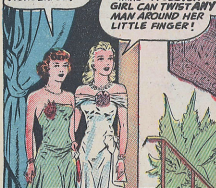
# ROMANCE of the RING





YOU SEE, I DIDN'T INVITE BERT TONIGHT! I---I'VE MET ANOTHER MAN, AND HE'S... **WONDERFUL!**

GOOD GIRL---YOU'RE GROWING UP! JUST SO LONG AS YOU DON'T FORGET ONE THING---**A CLEVER GIRL CAN TWIST ANY MAN AROUND HER LITTLE FINGER!**



**IT WAS AT THIS MOMENT THAT I CAUGHT MY FIRST GLIMPSE OF JACKIE LANDS---AND FOR A MOMENT, MY HEART STOOD STILL!**

THAT---THAT MAN, SUSAN! WHO IS HE?

THE MAN I WAS TELLING YOU ABOUT, SILLY! HE'S A--- **PRIZEFIGHTER!**



**'A PRIZEFIGHTER! THE MERE WORD WAS ENOUGH TO STILL THE THUDDING OF MY HEART! FOR I WAS THE WEALTHY AND CULTURED LINDA SAYRES! NOW DARED A COMMON PUGILIST INVADE MY HOME?'**

SUSAN! HOW COULD YOU! INVITING A COMMON PERSON LIKE THAT TO YOUR PARTY!

BUT LINDA, HE ISN'T COMMON! HE'S THE **MIDDLEWEIGHT CHAMPION OF THE WORLD!**



**'CHAMPION OF THE WORLD! THAT MADE THINGS DIFFERENT! NEW VISTAS OF EXCITEMENT OPENED BEFORE ME! MY FRIENDS HAD BORED ME FOR YEARS, SO... WHY NOT?'**

WELL, IT'S YOUR BIRTHDAY---SO I'LL FORGIVE YOU! ER---YOU MIGHT AS WELL INTRODUCE US!

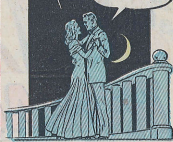
GEE, I HOPE YOU LIKE HIM, BECAUSE--- **I DO!**



**'LIVE DANCED TOGETHER---AND I DIDN'T LOSE ANY TIME IN STEERING HIM TO THE TERRACE.'**

IT'S NICE---DANCING OUT HERE! I'VE NEVER MET ANYONE WHOSE ARMS FELT SO GURE...AND SO **STRONG!**

YOU KNOW, I'VE NEVER MET A GIRL LIKE YOU! I'VE BEEN TOO BUSY TRAINING AND FIGHTING TO GO TO PARTIES AND THINGS--- BUT...



YOU'VE BEEN MISSING A LOT OF FUN, JACKIE! I WANT TO HELP YOU MAKE UP FOR ALL THE TIME YOU'VE LOST---

GEE, LINDA! YOU---YOU'RE THE **MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL I'VE EVER MET!**



**'SHE SWERVED TOWARD HIM, MY EYES HOLDING HIS! AND THE NEXT INSTANT, OUR LIPS MET IN A CLOSE KISS---AND A STRANGE FEELING OF WEAKNESS SWEPT OVER ME! BUT I THRUST IT FROM MY MIND, WHICH HAD ROOM FOR BUT A SINGLE THOUGHT---I'VE CONQUERED THE CHAMPION OF THE WORLD!'**

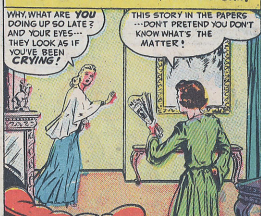




"YES, JACKIE WAS MY CONQUEST---MY SLAVE! NIGHT AFTER NIGHT I DISPLAYED HIM, DRAWING HIM INTO MY HECTIC ROUND OF PARTIES AND GAIETY---"



"SHE MIGHT HAVE KNOWN THAT THE NEWSPAPERS WOULD MAKE A STORY OUT OF OUR ROMANCE! ONE NIGHT, RETURNING FROM A DATE WITH JACKIE, I FOUND... SUSAN!"



OH, FORGET IT! DON'T TELL ME MY LITTLE SISTER BELIEVES EVERYTHING SHE READS IN THE GOSSIP COLUMNS!



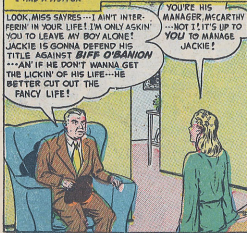
GET THIS, KID! I CAN'T STOP JACKIE FROM RUNNING AFTER ME NOW... BUT HE'LL SOON REALIZE HE MEANS NOTHING TO ME! HE'LL COME BACK TO YOU THEN!



"SHE CRIED HERSELF TO SLEEP IN MY ARMS! BUT WHAT I HAD TOLD HER WAS TRUE! JACKIE LANDS MEANT ONLY ONE THING TO ME... ANOTHER CONQUEST, NOTHING MORE! I WAS SURE OF IT!"



"BUT MY TROUBLES WERE NOT YET OVER! NEXT MORNING, I HAD A VISITOR---"



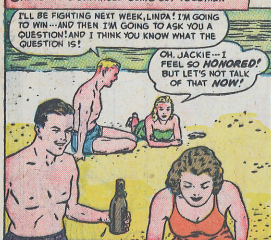
BUT YA GOTTA HELP ME! HE'S A GOOD BOY--- THEY DON'T COME NO BETTER! BUT IF YOU DON'T STOP ENCOURAGIN' HIM, HE'S IN FOR TROUBLE!

REALLY? IF YOU DON'T MIND... GOODBYE!



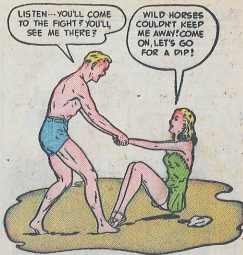


**"JACKIE AND I CONTINUED GOING OUT TOGETHER..."**



I'LL BE FIGHTING NEXT WEEK, LINDA! I'M GOING TO WIN--AND THEN I'M GOING TO ASK YOU A QUESTION! AND I THINK YOU KNOW WHAT THE QUESTION IS!

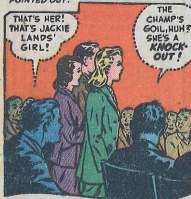
OH, JACKIE--I FEEL SO HONORED! BUT LET'S NOT TALK OF THAT NOW!



LISTEN...YOU'LL COME TO THE FIGHT? YOU'LL SEE ME THERE?

WILD HORSES COULDN'T KEEP ME AWAY! COME ON, LET'S GO FOR A DIP!

THE TIME PASSED SWIFTLY IN A ROUND OF PLEASURE! THEN CAME THE NIGHT OF THE FIGHT--AND AS I WALKED DOWN THE AISLE TO MY SEAT, I FELT A HUNDRED EYES ON ME--AND I HEARD THE WHISPERS AS I WAS POINTED OUT!"



THAT'S HER! THAT'S JACKIE LANDS' GIRL!

THE CHAMP'S GOIL, HUH? SHE'S A KNOCK-OUT!

THE CHAMP'S GIRL! INWARDLY, I LAUGHED AT THE FOOLS! I, THE CHAMP'S GIRL? NO! HE WAS MY SLAVE!



WE'RE ALL INVITED TO JACKIE'S DRESSING ROOM AFTER THE FIGHT--FOR A LITTLE PARTY HE'S HAVING!

AND IN THIS CORNER, WEIGHING 160 POUNDS--THE DEFENDING CHAMPION--JACKIE LANDS!

THE CHEERS DIED OUT--THERE WAS A MOMENT OF HUSHED, EXPECTANT SILENCE--AND THEN THE BELL RANG "



**CLANG!**

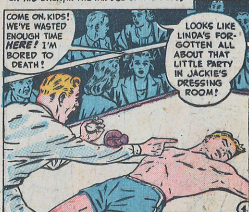
SOMEHOW, JACKIE DIDN'T SEEM SURE OF HIMSELF! O'BANION WAS SMASHING BLOW AFTER BLOW INTO HIM! ROUND FOLLOWED ROUND...AND SOON THE CROWD WAS BOOING JACKIE! AND I FELT THE BOOS AS THOUGH THEY HAD BEEN DIRECTED AT ME!"



WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH YOUR BOY FRIEND, LINDA? HE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE DOING SO WELL!

MY DEAR, HE'S NOT MY BOY FRIEND! SO YOU NEEDN'T BE CATTY!

I LOST COUNT OF THE ROUNDS--AND I DIDN'T REALLY REALIZE WHAT HAPPENED UNTIL I HEARD THE CROWD GO WILD WITH CHEERING--AND I SAW JACKIE LYING ON HIS BACK, IN THE MIDDLE OF THE RING!



COME ON, KIDS! WE'VE WASTED ENOUGH TIME HERE! I'M BORED TO DEATH!

LOOKS LIKE LINDA'S FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT THAT LITTLE PARTY IN JACKIE'S DRESSING ROOM!



INDIFFERENTLY, I READ THE DETAILS OF THE FIGHT NEXT MORNING...

IF THAT JACKIE LANDS PERSON CALLS, TELL HIM I'M OUT! ANYTHING... BUT GET RID OF HIM!



AND WITH THE PASSING OF THE DAYS...

YES, I KNOW YOU'VE BEEN CALLING FOR TWO WEEKS, MR. LANDS... BUT MISS LINDA IS STILL OUT!

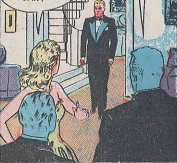


HE IS PERSISTENT, ISN'T HE? HANG UP ON HIM AND HELP ME FINISH DRESSING... OR I'LL BE LATE FOR JERRY DRISCOLL'S PARTY!



THE PARTY HAD BARELY STARTED WHEN...

J-JACKIE LANDS! YOU... YOU DIDN'T INVITE HIM HERE, DID YOU, JERRY DEAR?



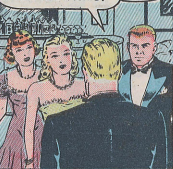
UH-UH! THAT HAS BEEN PUG HAS A NERVE CRASHING MY PARTY!

I HEARD YOU SAY WHERE YOU WERE GOING OVER THE PHONE, LINDA! I... I HAD TO SEE YOU!

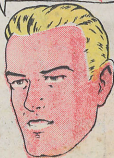


WELL, YOU'VE SEEN ME... SO YOU CAN GO NOW!

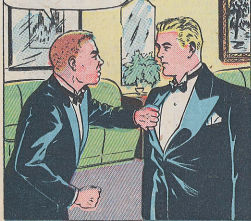
WAIT! I'M GONNA TELL YOU WHAT I THINK OF YOU FIRST! YOU MADE ME FALL IN LOVE WITH YOU... NOT BECAUSE YOU HAD ANY FEELING FOR ME... BUT BECAUSE I WAS THE CHAMP! AND IT MADE YOU FEEL JUST SWEET TO HAVE A WORLD'S CHAMP FOLLOW YOU AROUND LIKE A SLAVE!



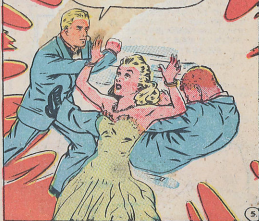
AND TO THINK I LOVED YOU... DEEPLY, TRULY! I WANTED TO OFFER YOU EVERYTHING I HAD! BUT YOU... YOU PLAYED WITH MY LOVE... THREW IT AWAY WHEN YOU HAD NO FURTHER USE FOR IT! YOU'RE A WORTHLESS SNOB, LINDA SAYRES!



SEE HERE, YOU WASHED-UP POOL! YOU CAN'T TALK TO MY GIRL LIKE THAT, SEE?



CAN'T I? CAREFUL, LINDA... HERE COMES YOUR NEW BOYFRIEND!





"SO WASN'T PREPARED FOR WHAT HAPPENED NEXT! FOR JACKIE'S POWERFUL ARMS SWEEPED ME AGAINST HIM IN A TORRENT OF BITTER EMOTION! HIS LIPS CRUSHED MINE, FILLING ME WITH A FRENZIED FIRE I HAD NEVER KNOWN!"



OH...

"BREATHLESSLY, I WATCHED HIM STEP BACK FROM ME..."

THAT WAS REAL LOVE, LINDA... A SAMPLE OF WHAT YOU COULD HAVE HAD! BUT YOU PREFER THE CHEAP IMITATION--AND YOU CAN HAVE IT!



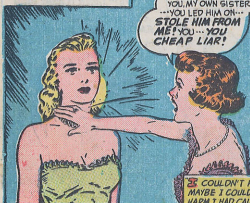
"WITH THAT, HE WAS GONE!! I STOOD THERE DESOLATELY, MY BODY WRACKED WITH A STRANGE, BITTER SWEET PAIN! I HAD NEVER BEEN TREATED THIS WAY BEFORE... BUT NOW I WANTED TO FEEL HIS ARMS ABOUT ME ONCE MORE, HIS LIPS ON MINE!"



"BUT SUSAN HAD SEEN AND HEARD ALL! AS FROM A GREAT DISTANCE, I SENSED HER WORDS, FELT THE STINGING IMPACT OF HER SLAP..."

SO YOU WEREN'T INTERESTED IN HIM... COULDN'T HELP HIS FOLLOWING YOU AROUND!

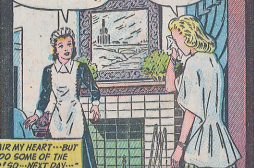
YOU, MY OWN SISTER... YOU LED HIM ON... STOLE HIM FROM ME! YOU... YOU CHEAP LIAR!



"WITH HER WORDS, I KNEW WHAT I HAD HAD--AND LOST! LOVE HAD COME TO ME--TOO LATE! HEARTBROKEN, CHOKING WITH SOBS, I KUSHED HOMEWARD!"

WHY, MISS LINDA, YOU'RE HOME EARLY!... IS... IS ANYTHING THE MATTER?

JUST GO AWAY... PLEASE--AND LEAVE ME ALONE!

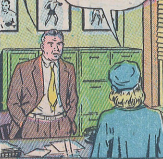


I COULDN'T REPAIR MY HEART--BUT MAYBE I COULD UNDO SOME OF THE HARM I HAD CAUSED! SO--NEXT DAY--

WELL, LINDA SAYRES--HOW DO YOU LIKE YOURSELF SELFISH--STUPID--CHEAP! I'M EVERYTHING HE SAID I WAS! I'VE BROUGHT RUIN TO JACKIE--UNHAPPINESS TO SUSAN--AND BROKE MY OWN HEART IN THE PROCESS!

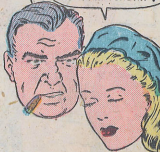
SO IT'S YOU, HUH? HAVEN'T YA DONE ENOUGH HARM? WHAT MORE DO YA WANT?

I--I DON'T BLAME YOU FOR FEELING THAT WAY, MR. MCCARTHY! BUT THIS TIME I WANT TO HELP JACKIE! I WANT TO BUY HIS CONTRACT FROM YOU!



YOU'RE CRAZY! ANYWAY, HE'S NO GOOD NOW--HE'S ALL BUSTED UP INSIDE! NO HEART LEFT!

I THINK I KNOW HOW TO RESTORE IT--AND HELP HIM WIN BACK HIS CHAMPIONSHIP!

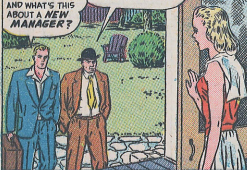




"I BOUGHT JACKIE'S CONTRACT...AND HIRED MCCARTHY TO HELP TRAIN HIM FOR A RETURN BOUT WITH THE NEW CHAMPION! THEN I DROVE OUT TO THE TRAINING CAMP..."

WHAT'S THE IDEA OF RUSHING ME INTO A RETURN BOUT, MAC? AND WHAT'S THIS ABOUT A NEW MANAGER?

IT WASN'T MY IDEA, KID! AND THIS FIGHT AIN'T THE ONLY THING YER NOT GONNA LIKE ABOUT YER NEW MANAGER!



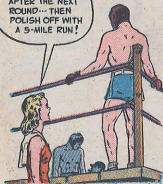
I'M YOUR MANAGER NOW, JACKIE...AND YOU'LL DO WHATEVER I TELL YOU AND FIGHT WHENEVER I DECIDE! I OWN YOUR CONTRACT...AND THE BOXING COMMISSION WILL BACK ME UP!

LINDA! YOU!

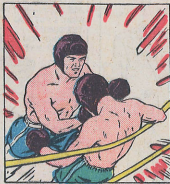


"THESE WERE HIS ONLY WORDS--BUT I FELT HIS HATRED AND CONTEMPT CURL ABOUT ME LIKE A WHPLASH! SILENT, SILENT, HE OBEYED MY ORDERS..."

TAKE A SHOWER AFTER THE NEXT ROUND... THEN POLISH OFF WITH A 5-MILE RUN!



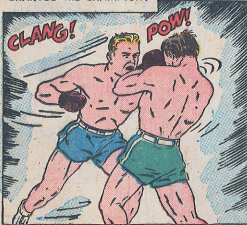
"THE DAYS PASSED IN SMOLDERING RAGE! JACKIE BOXED VICIOUSLY...AND I FELT DEEP IN MY HEART THAT EVERY TIME HE STRUCK HE SAW ONLY MY FACE IN FRONT OF HIM! AND I FELT EVERY BLOW, AS IF I WERE HIS ADVERSARY!"



YES, I KNEW THAT HATRED WAS THE ONLY THING THAT COULD MAKE HIM FORGET THE HURT I HAD CAUSED HIM! WAS IT ENOUGH...TO WIN BACK HIS CHAMPIONSHIP? THE NIGHT OF THE FIGHT, JUST BEFORE THE BELL, I PLAYED MY LAST TRUMP!

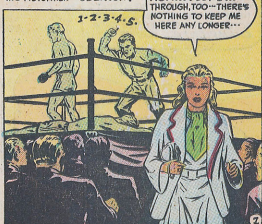


"THE BELL RANG...AND I SAW COLD FURY, PENT-UP HATRED RISE IN JACKIE'S FACE! LIKE A MADMAN, HE CHARGED THE CHAMPION!"



"O'BANION NEVER KNEW WHAT HIT HIM! FIRST A FLURRY OF FLYING FISTS, THEN--OBIVION!"

HE'S THROUGH... AND JACKIE'S CHAMP AGAIN! BUT I'M THROUGH, TOO--THERE'S NOTHING TO KEEP ME HERE ANY LONGER...





"AMID WILD CHEERS FOR THE RE-CROWNED CHAMPION, I SLIPPED AWAY, PREPARED A NOTE AT HOME—"

"DEAR SUSAN,  
I'VE BEEN A FOOL, AND MY SELFISH-  
NESS HAS DONE TERRIBLE THINGS  
TO YOU AND JACKIE. I'M GOING AWAY,  
NEVER TO RETURN. TRY TO FORGIVE ME,  
AND BE HAPPY WITH HIM—YOU TWO  
BELONG TOGETHER. BY THE TIME YOU  
GET THIS, THE S.S. PARAGUAY WILL  
BE ON THE HIGH SEAS.  
GOODBYE, DEAR,  
LINDA"



"THAT'S THE WAY IT ALL HAPPENED!  
AND NOW I WAS IN A DECKCHAIR, ALONE  
WATCHING NEW YORK'S SKYSCRAPERS  
RETREAT INTO THE FOG!"

IF...IF ONLY I HAD IT TO LIVE  
OVER! MY FRIENDS, MY SISTER,  
THE MAN I LOVED...ALL GONE!  
BUT I'VE COME OUT OF IT WITH  
HONEST EYES...I CAN SEE MYSELF  
AS I APPEARED TO OTHERS  
...AS I REALLY WAS! BUT  
IT'S TOO LATE!

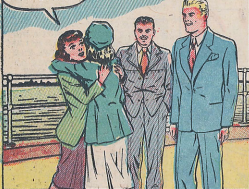


"THROUGH MY THOUGHTS CAME THE  
ROARING OF A SPEEDBOAT, A NAIL! THE  
SHIP SLOWED...AND THEN..."



HOW? IN BERT'S  
SPEEDBOAT, OF  
COURSE! I DECIDED  
OLD LOVES WERE  
BEST...SO I WENT  
BACK TO HIM!

LET HER GO, SUSAN  
...LET HER SEE WHO  
ELSE IS HERE!



"THAT VOICE...IT WAS JACKIE! AND THE NEXT MOMENT  
I WAS IN HIS ARMS, WEEDING WITH A HAPPINESS I HAD  
THOUGHT WAS LOST FOREVER!"

OH JACKIE...JACKIE!  
I...I NEVER DREAMED  
YOU'D WANT TO SEE  
ME AGAIN...NOT AFTER  
WHAT I PUT YOU  
THROUGH! I...  
THOUGHT YOU  
HATED ME!



AND THERE'S ONE MORE THING I HAVE TO  
TELL YOU, LINDA! YOU'VE REALIZED YOUR  
MISTAKES...YOU'VE ADMITTED THEM...AND  
YOU'VE MADE UP FOR THEM! THAT'S SOME-  
THING ONLY ONE PERSON COULD DO...  
SOMEONE WITH THE HEART OF A  
CHAMPION! AND YOU'VE GOT IT!



HOW'S ABOUT LOOKING  
UP THE CAPTAIN, BERT?  
LET'S SEE IF HE CAN'T  
PERFORM A DOUBLE  
MARRIAGE!

SWELL IDEA, SUSAN!  
AND WE'LL ALL STAY  
ON THE BOAT FOR  
A DOUBLE  
HONEYMOON!





# PRETEND *There's* SOMEONE

THERE was a knock on the door. "Answer that, June," said Linda, indolently filing her fingernails.

June rose obediently and went to the door. Linda's disinterest vanished as she heard June say, "Flowers? For me?"

Linda's lips curled contemptuously. How long did June think she could get away with that silly pretense? Ever since Linda had found the florist's bill, pitifully small, she had known June's secret. Known it and laughed at it.

For it was plain that June was sending *herself* these flowers, as well as the little bottles of perfume, the notes, the trinkets that had been arriving every week. And it was plain *why*: Linda's eyes narrowed as she watched her roommate placing the flowers in a low bowl. *Jealousy*, that was it!

Her voice cut sharply through the silence. "Isn't it about time you gave that childishness up?" Linda asked sneeringly.

June blushed a hot red and then turned pale. "What . . . what do you mean?"

"I mean that you're making a fool of yourself! Just whom are you trying to impress . . . *me*? Well, don't bother! While your flowers are wilting, I'll be out tonight, dancing. And *not* with a figment of my imagination!"

June managed to keep the tears back until Linda had reddened her lips, smoothed her bangs and flounced out of the door. And then they came, pouring down her cheeks in an uncontrollable flood.

Lying face down on her bed, June shook with sobs. Linda was the glamorous one, the sought-after one, the accom-

plished flatterer who managed to wheedle dates and gifts from numberless men who came and went in her life. For the past year, since they had been sharing their little apartment, June had seen all the romance and excitement pass *her* by, while Linda primped and giggled and danced.

"It . . . it was harmless, my pretending," June sobbed, alone in the room. She had so wanted the feeling of being wanted! She had longed to be courted and admired. But Linda's dates, smooth and sophisticated, had acted as though she didn't exist! That was why she had started to play the little game . . . *pretending there was someone* . . .

A knock on the door made June start up. Her cheeks were flushed and tear-stained, her hair tousled, as she opened the door, opened it to stare questioningly at the handsomest young man she had ever seen!

"Miss Linda Beck?" he asked.

"No, Linda's out. I'm her roommate, June Hollis. Is there anything I . . ."

"I'm Tom Hollander, a friend of Linda's brother," he said. "When they heard I was coming East, they asked me to stop in and say hello. Something tells me I'm going to be *glad* I did!"

June's smile was like the beginning of a sunrise. "Won't you come in?" she said.

At twelve-thirty, when Linda got home, she took one look at Tom and started her campaign. But Tom soon set her straight. "Thanks for finding me my girl, Miss Beck," he smiled. "I'm not being presumptuous, am I, June?"

June smiled demurely, and a bit wickedly. "No, Tom," she said.



# SOMETHING NEW... *Something* DIFFERENT!

**F**OR THE FIRST TIME--THRILL-LADEN ROMANCES...GRIPPING LOVE STORIES! HEART-THROB TALES YOU'LL REMEMBER FOREVER... BECAUSE THEY MIGHT HAVE-HAPPENED TO **YOU!** FOR GREAT ADVENTURES IN ROMANCE...FOR THE MOST CAPTIVATING LOVE STORIES EVER TOLD...

*Don't Miss*



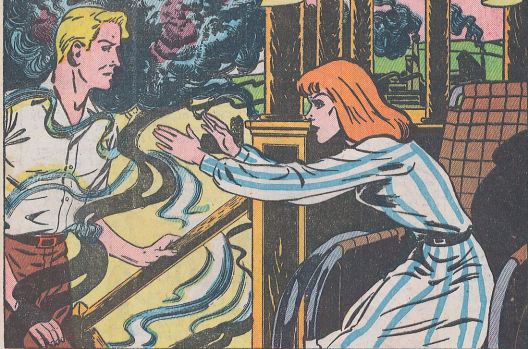
The MAGAZINE OF YOUTH AND LOVE!  
**Romantic Adventures**

**10¢**  
ON ALL  
STANDS



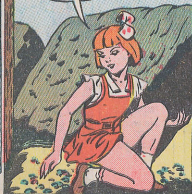
# The Greatest Power

So near, and yet... so far!  
Love was only a step away,  
but it was a step I could not  
take! Would I ever be free  
of the wheelchair that kept  
me prisoner? Would I ever  
cling instead to the arms  
of a man? What power  
could give me... **LOVE?**



"I was about  
five years  
old when it  
happened...  
a sunny  
little girl,  
daughter of  
Jim Brand,  
manager of  
the Pittstown  
coal mines!  
I remember  
hunting for  
pretty  
pebbles  
and rocks..."

LAINEY FIND SPARKLY  
ROCKS FOR MUMMY  
AND DADDY! LAINEY  
**SURPRISE**  
THEM!



"They had warned me over and over...  
'Lainey, stay away from the shafts! They're  
dangerous...**BAD!**' But I was small and  
inquisitive! I didn't understand that  
big word... **DANGEROUS...** until..."

OH! LAINEY FALLING!  
OOOH! ...





*"Swamped by helplessness, panic, I lay there, whimpering with pain! The shaft, black and cold, held thousands of nameless fears for me..."*

MUMMY... DADDY... I'M HERE... **FIND ME!!!**



*"Time dragged! Faint with terror, pain and hunger, I wondered whether Mummy and Daddy had missed me... were looking for me! And high above, hundreds of Searchers hurried to help a heartbroken mother..."*

NO, MRS. BRAND, SHE'S NOT BEEN ON THE HIGHWAY!

FIND MY LITTLE GIRL... PLEASE... PLEASE!



*"The next morning, they found the deserted shaft!*

*For many hours I had known nothing but the beating of my terror-stricken heart! When I could no longer stand it, a merciful darkness descended over me!"*

**SHE'S DOWN HERE! THROW ME A LINE!**



*"A whole night had passed before they found me!... a night filled with more horror than any little girl could describe! I shivered and cried when I found my mother's arms again..."*

LAINEY, BABY, YOU'RE SAFE NOW! TELL ME, DOCTOR, IS SHE ALL RIGHT?

I CAN'T TELL THAT UNTIL I EXAMINE HER, MRS. BRAND! BETTER LET ME CHECK HER FOR BROKEN BONES!



*"I screamed with pain as Dr. Olds touched my leg!"*

I'M AFRAID LAINEY'S FRACTURED A BONE HERE... BUT IT'S NOT TOO BAD! WE'LL HAVE HER RUNNING AROUND AGAIN IN NO TIME!

I'M GRATEFUL! IT COULD HAVE BEEN WORSE!



*"The doctor had said 'in no time'!*

*After two months or so, we went to his office. I was going to run about again... we were so happy..."*

SHE'S HEALED BEAUTIFULLY! COME ON, LAINEY... WALK INTO YOUR MOTHER'S ARMS!

COME TO MUMMY, DARLING... LAINEY... LAINEY!

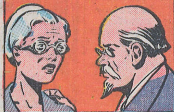




"Sometimes, I can still recall the sound of Mother's desperate cry! And as the months went by, and the years, the desperation gave way to a sorrowful resignation! It was many years, however, before she could bring herself to admit the truth..."

YOU DON'T HAVE TO SAY IT, DR. OLDS... I KNOW! LAINEY CAN'T WALK... **SHE WILL NEVER WALK!**

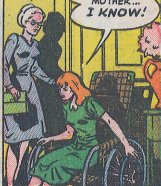
I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT, MRS. BRAND... HER LEG HEALED **YEARS AGO!** AND YET... YOU'RE RIGHT! **LAINEY CANNOT WALK!**



"Waiting outside, I couldn't hear them, but I knew the truth, too! I had tried so many times to stand... to take **ONE STEP!** But I couldn't! A great fear kept me chained... powerless... **A GIRL IN A WHEELCHAIR!**"

DR. OLDS SAYS YOU'LL BE **FINE, LAINEY!** JUST A LITTLE MORE TIME... AND PATIENCE!

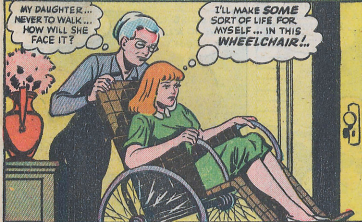
I KNOW, MOTHER... **I KNOW!**



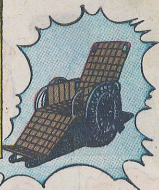
"Yes, I knew! As Mother wheeled me down the hall, we were each thinking our own thoughts, afraid to speak them aloud..."

MY DAUGHTER... NEVER TO WALK... HOW WILL SHE FACE IT?

I'LL MAKE **SOME** SORT OF LIFE FOR MYSELF... IN THIS **WHEELCHAIR!**

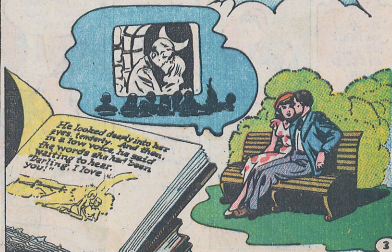


"By the time I was eighteen, I had made that life! It was quiet, unexciting, **UNREAL!**"



"I learned to know the meaning of sympathy and devotion, but there was one word I did not completely understand... **LOVE!**

In the movies, in books, in the neighborhood park, I saw and heard the word and I felt a deep longing... a longing that could never be satisfied!"





"For me, every day was like the day before!

I never expected to know the thrill of romance, of love... and then... one bright afternoon... a stranger came up our steps and spoke to me..."

IS MR. BRAND IN?

NO, BUT I EXPECT HIM SOON! I'M HIS DAUGHTER, ELAINE! WON'T YOU SIT DOWN?"

"For no reason at all, I felt myself blushing as he looked at me! He could not see my wheelchair, off in a corner! He saw only a pretty girl, swinging in a hammock... FOR TWO!"

MIND IF I SIT NEXT TO YOU?

WHY... WHY, NO... OF COURSE NOT...

"I tried to tell him, subtly, that I was not... not like other girls! But it was hard..."

MY, YOU'RE PRETTY! I FEEL A STRANGE, IRRESISTIBLE IMPULSE COMING ON!

YOU... YOU'RE A NEWCOMER TO PITTSBURY, MR. ... ER ...

"My heart pounded with fear as he drew closer! And, in that fear, was something else ... excitement ... anticipation ... hope ..."

I'M GOING TO HAVE TO KISS YOU!

PLEASE ... PLEASE ... YOU DON'T --

"He lifted me in his arms and... KISSED ME!

My FIRST kiss! I clung to him, dizzy with emotion, feeling his arms... his lips..."

"And then... he released me... and I sank to the floor! The look of horror on his face as he realized the truth shocked me... told me that I must forever cast aside all daydreams!"

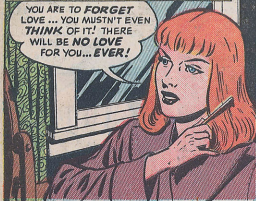
I... I'M SORRY! I CAN'T WALK, YOU SEE!

I'M SORRY... I DIDN'T KNOW... WILL YOU EXCUSE ME... I'VE GOT TO BE GOING...



"That night, I faced myself squarely and spoke aloud the words that had been whispering in my heart! I could no longer deceive myself..."

YOU ARE TO **FORGET** LOVE ... YOU MUSTN'T EVEN **THINK** OF IT! THERE WILL BE **NO LOVE** FOR YOU... **EVER!**



"That was my resolve! That one episode had shown me my path... and I would **NEVER** waver! And so, my face was calm, my pulses steady, when Dad said, one week later..."

LAINEY, THIS IS KIRK TAYLOR, A SAFETY ENGINEER FROM THE CENTRAL OFFICE! HE'LL BE VISITING WITH US WHILE HE CHECKS THE MINES!

HOW DO YOU DO, MR. TAYLOR?



"He was attractive... strong, quiet, kind-looking!

But I was taking no chances with my heart!

I wanted no explosions!

And so, **THIS** time, I made certain..."

DINNER'S READY, EVERYBODY!

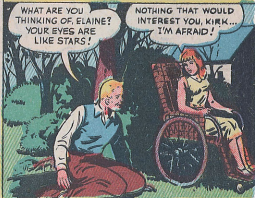
MR. TAYLOR, WILL YOU **WHEEL** ME INTO THE DINING ROOM?



"After a few days, he was calling me Elaine... and I called him Kirk! It was good to have him with us! Sometimes, I caught myself dreaming... if only... **IF ONLY...**"

WHAT ARE YOU THINKING OF, ELAINE? YOUR EYES ARE LIKE STARS!

NOTHING THAT WOULD INTEREST YOU, KIRK... I'M AFRAID!



No, nothing I could tell him! Yet, whenever I saw Kirk, my heart would leap, my eyes would shine! I wanted to touch him... to know he was near! But my legs... my legs remained cold and dead... a reminder of my vow."

HE'LL BE LEAVING IN A WEEK OR SO... WHY START SOMETHING I CAN NEVER **FINISH**?



"But sometimes, the head will lay plans that the heart will not follow! And who's to know which one is right?"

WHY, MOTHER, YOU'RE SMILING LIKE THE CAT THAT'S GOT THE CANARY! WHAT'S THE GOOD NEWS?

DON'T YOU REMEMBER, LAINEY? TOMORROW'S YOUR BIRTHDAY AND WE'RE HAVING A **PARTY!**





"My nineteenth birthday! I had never dressed so carefully... paid so much attention to the way I looked! I wanted to be beautiful, loved... like **OTHER** girls!"

HERE'S TO LAINEY!

THE PRETTIEST GIRL IN TOWN!



"I had eyes only for Kirk, who was standing close to Liz Burdette... **TOO** close! She was smiling, touching his arm... and he was smiling, too! Suddenly, I wanted to cry, but..."

YOUR BIRTHDAY CAKE, LAINEY! YOU'VE GOT TO MAKE... **A WISH!**



"I didn't wish... I **PRAYED!** And I needn't tell what my prayer was! I shut my eyes tightly and..."

SHE'S BLOWN 'EM **ALL** OUT!

THAT MEANS YOUR WISH WILL COME **TRUE**, LAINEY!



"Everyone was shaking my hand, wishing many happy returns, kissing me! And then... **HE** was at my side..."

DO NEW FRIENDS RATE A BIRTHDAY KISS, ELAINE?

OH, GO AHEAD AND **KISS** HER, KIRK! DON'T ASK QUESTIONS!



"It was not the first kiss I had ever received, but it was the first kiss I had ever **GIVEN!** Everyone, everything else in the room seemed to fade away as our lips met... and clung..."



"I wanted to cover my face, for I knew I could never hide the truth! And the truth was that... I **LOVED KIRK!**"

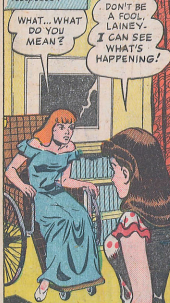
ELAINE, I...

LAINEY, IF YOU DON'T MIND, I'D LIKE TO SPEAK TO YOU... **PRIVATELY!**





**"LIZ BURDETTE AGAIN!**  
A sense of warning, of danger,  
stole over me as she wheeled  
me into the study, away from  
the crowd! I didn't want  
to hear her, but I was  
helpless!"



WHAT... WHAT  
DO YOU  
MEAN?

...DON'T BE  
A FOOL,  
LAINEY.  
I CAN SEE  
WHAT'S  
HAPPENING!

"I knew what she meant...  
and I trembled as she  
spoke..."

KIRK'S NOT FOR **YOU**, LAINEY...  
**NO MAN IS!** WHAT RIGHT  
HAVE YOU TO ENCOURAGE  
HIM? WHAT CAN **YOU**  
GIVE HIM? HOW CAN YOU  
MAKE HIM HAPPY?... A  
GIRL LIKE **YOU**? I DON'T  
WANT TO BE CRUEL,  
LAINEY, BUT...



**"But the truth was cruel!**  
I left the party and went to  
my room! Alone, I could cry  
my heart out and bid fare-  
well to my dreams! That was  
the bitterest moment of my  
life... but I had to see it  
through!"



I MUST **FORGET**  
HIS KISS... **FORGET HIM!**  
IT WON'T BE HARD TO  
DO WHEN HE'S...  
WHEN HE'S...  
**GONE!**

"From that moment on, I  
decided to treat Kirk casually,  
as if he were no more than a  
guest in our house! The next  
morning, at breakfast, I  
managed to mask my feelings  
... but it was difficult...."



HOW ABOUT A GAME OF  
DOUBLE SOLITAIRE AFTER  
COFFEE, ELAINE?

THANKS,  
**NO...** I'VE  
SOME  
LETTERS  
TO WRITE...

"I pretended to fuss with  
a letter, but I could hear  
Kirk's voice coming from  
the study... his and dad's..."



I'VE COMPLETED MY SURVEY,  
MR. BRAND, AND I'M READY  
TO REPORT TO THE  
CENTRAL OFFICE --

GLAD YOU  
DIDN'T FIND  
ANYTHING  
**WRONG**  
IN MY MINES,  
KIRK!

"I caught my breath as I  
detected a change in Kirk's  
voice! It was suddenly  
flat... ominous..."



I DIDN'T SAY THAT, MR. BRAND!  
AS A MATTER OF FACT, THERE  
**IS** SOMETHING WRONG...  
**DANGEROUSLY**  
**WRONG!**



"Kirk was telling Dad that he had found a trouble spot in one of the mines... that he wanted Dad to have it reinforced... **IMMEDIATELY!**"

I'LL HOLD OFF MY REPORT TILL YOU HAVE IT FIXED, SIR!

YOU'RE **WRONG**, SON! YOU'RE JUST **LOOKING** FOR TROUBLE WHERE THERE ISN'T ANY... I'LL SHORE IT UP WHEN THE WORK STARTS!



"Dad's swell, but he hates to be advised by a younger man! I could hear the stubborn ring in his voice... and the anger in Kirk's!"

RUN ALONG, BOY... STOP LOOKING FOR TROUBLE!

I'VE **FOUND** IT, SIR! IF **YOU** WON'T HAVE THAT MINE SHAFT CHECKED, I'LL DO IT MYSELF!



"There was a terrible silence, and then I saw Kirk, grim and white-lipped, stride from the study! I wanted to say something... but I knew I must not interfere! Something was going to happen... something I couldn't prevent!"

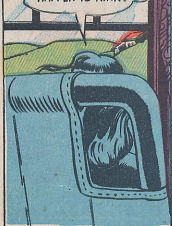


"Early next morning, I stationed myself at a window overlooking the shafts! Mother and Dad were out for the day and I was alone with my love... my love and fear for Kirk, who was somewhere... **DOWN THERE!**"

"My prayer came too late! As I looked down the sloping hill that led to the mines, a piercing chill struck at my heart! From far below, I heard the treacherous rumbling... and then..."

"For an instant, I was stunned, sick with the picture that sprang to my mind! Then panic flooded me, torturing me, racking me, driving me to desperation!"

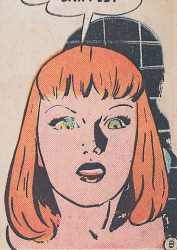
HE'S THERE... BY HIMSELF... IN THAT HORRIBLE SHAFT! OH, PLEASE, GOD, DON'T LET ANYTHING HAPPEN TO KIRK!



IT'S A **CAVE-IN!** AND KIRK'S IN THERE... **ALONE!**



HE... HE'LL BE **KILLED!** I LOVE HIM... I MUST HELP HIM... **SAVE HIM...** BUT **HOW?** I--I'M A **CRIPPLE!**...





"How I reached that shaft I shall never know! Perhaps a **POWER** stronger than our own comes to our aid in distress..."

KIRK, KIRK, DARLING!  
**CAN YOU HEAR ME? TRY TO ANSWER, KIRK!**



"Fighting my hysteria, I drew close to the mouth of **THAT SHAFT**... the shaft I had feared and hated since childhood! But my own fears seemed far away as I saw the man I loved ... far below ..."

HE'S THERE ... THANK GOD I'VE FOUND HIM!  
BUT... **THAT FIRE!**  
NO, KIRK...  
**NO!**



"**FIRE!** The word tore from my throat like a shriek of pain! In a surge of fear, I realized that Kirk was as helpless as I... no! **MORE** helpless! For HE lay unconscious at the bottom of that shaft while I could think... **I ACT!**..."

YES... **ACT!** I'VE... GOT... TO... WALK -- GOT TO SAVE KIRK... GOT TO WALK...



"I don't remember clearly what happened then! I knew only... only that Kirk's life depended on **ME!** And that I must not fail him... or myself!"

"LAINEY WILL SOON BE ABLE TO... RUN ABOUT!"  
-- OH, THE PAIN!  
KIRK, DARLING...  
**I'M COMING!**



"There was a pulley in the mouth of that shaft! Even though I had never gone near it... not since I was five ... I remembered it well! It was part of my plan ..."

**I'M COMING, KIRK! YOU'LL BE ALL RIGHT, DARLING! YOU WILL... YOU MUST BE!**



"That shaft was an old nightmare to me! I had to fight **MYSELF** as well as the flames that swept toward us... But I seemed to have a mysterious power fighting within me... helping me ..."

HE'S UNCONSCIOUS... I'VE GOT TO GET HIM OUT! THE PULLEY WILL HOLD HIM... I'LL SEND HIM UP... ABOVE GROUND TO SAFETY! AS FOR **ME**... AS FOR **ME**...





The pulley moved clumsily... rusted with disuse... but I saw Kirk rising to the pure, clean air above! I had to stay below, but my feeling of triumph soared with him! "



GOODBYE, DARLING! PERHAPS I... WAS ALWAYS MEANT TO DIE HERE... IN THIS SHAFT...

"The fumes... the smoke... they were too strong for me to combat! Secure in the knowledge of Kirk's safety, welcoming the relief that oblivion would bring, I almost surrendered to the call of death! And then, just as it happened so many years ago..."

SHE'S DOWN HERE! THROW ME A LINE!



"They told me that Kirk was recovering in the hospital! Dad sat at my bedside, ashamed to cry... but wanting to..."



I WAS A STUBBORN OLD FOOL, LAINEY! YOUNG TAYLOR WAS RIGHT! AND... WE ALMOST LOST YOU!

THINGS WILL BE BETTER NOW, DAD... DON'T WORRY!

"The old wheelchair was near my bed, waiting for my day of recovery! But a new strength, a new power had come over me... together with the irresistible longing to see Kirk! "



MY OLD FRIEND, I THINK THE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO SAY... GOODBYE!

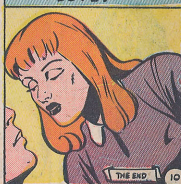
"I saw him from the doorway of the hospital room... one second before he looked up and saw me... STANDING THERE! The light in his face was all I needed to give strength to my faltering footsteps..."

ELAINE... DARLING... WALK! WALK TO ME!



I'M COMING, KIRK!

"I walked to him! Kirk couldn't walk to me as yet, so I... Elaine Brand... WALKED TO HIM! For I had discovered THE GREATEST POWER a woman can have... LOVE! "





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